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The Times

DOCUMENTARY HISTORY OF THE WAR

VOLUME VIII

MILITARY—PART 2



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PREFACE

THIS volume continues the publication of documents dealing with the Military aspects of the War in 1914. Despatches from British Eye-Witness and French and Belgian Official and semi-Official Reports illustrate the campaign in the West in that year. Despatches and *Communiqués* dealing with the Turkish campaign of 1914 are prefaced by a selection from the Turkish Papers [Cd. 7628], in so far as they are concerned with Military matters. Then follows material relating to the Japanese operations at Kiao-chau, and extracts from the Correspondence [Cd. 7972] and [Cd. 7975] dealing with the capture of German Pacific Possessions by Expeditionary Forces from Australia and New Zealand.

For convenience of reference, an explanatory list of the abbreviations used in the margin of this volume to indicate sources of information is here appended :—

B. des A. . .	*Bulletin des Armées* (French official military publication, issued monthly) ; and *Histoire de la Guerre par le Bulletin des Armées.* Paris, Hachette.
Second Belgian Grey Book .	*Correspondance Diplomatique relative à la Guerre de* 1914-15, ii.
K. D. . .	*Kriegs-Depeschen,* a German serial publication entitled ' Kriegs-Depeschen, nach den amtlichen Berichten des W.T.B. [*i.e.*, the Wolff Telegraphic Bureau] zusammengestellt ' (Boll u. Pickardt, Verlagsbuchhandlung, Berlin). This serial is largely, but not entirely, identical with *K. V.* below. (Issued monthly.)
K. V. . .	*Der Kriegsverlauf : Sammlung der amtlichen Nachrichten von den Kriegsschauplätzen.* Berlin, Carl Heymann. (Issued monthly.)
L. G. . . .	*London Gazette.*
P. B. . . .	Press Bureau.

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GERMAN INTENTION TO MAKE WAR

POTSDAM MEETING

July 5, 1914.

[The following important communication from a well-informed correspondent was made to *The Times* in July 1917.] *Times*, July 28, 1917

In the report of Herr Haase's speech in the Reichstag last week, which appears in the *Leipziger Volkszeitung* of July 29, there is a reference to 'the meeting of July 5, 1914,' as one of the matters which will have to be explained before the origin of the war is fully understood. This is the first public reference to a date which will probably become the most famous of the fateful month of July 1914.

I have it on authority which it is difficult, if not impossible, to doubt, that the meeting referred to was a meeting which was held at Potsdam on the date named. There were present the Kaiser, Herr von Bethmann Hollweg, Admiral von Tirpitz, General von Falkenhayn, Herr von Stumm, the Archduke Frederick, Count Berchtold, Count Tisza, and General Conrad von Hoetzendorf. It appears that Herr von Jagow and Count Moltke were not present.

The meeting discussed and decided upon all the principal points in the Austrian ultimatum which was to be despatched to Serbia eighteen days later. It was recognised that Russia would probably refuse to submit to such a direct humiliation, and that war would result. That consequence the meeting definitely decided to accept. It is probable, but not certain, that the date of mobilisation was fixed at the same time.

The Kaiser, as is well known, then left for Norway, with the object of throwing dust in the eyes of the French and Russian Governments. Three weeks later, when it became known that England would not remain neutral, Herr von Bethmann Hollweg wished to withdraw, but it was too late. The decision of July 5 was irrevocable.

The peculiar way, or rather ways, in which these facts have become known cannot as yet be told. But it is certain that most of Herr Haase's hearers were fully aware of the meaning of his reference to July 5. For the subject appears to have been more fully and explicitly raised in secret session of the Budget Committee of the Reichstag eight weeks ago by the Socialist Deputy, Herr Cohn. He challenged a certain Minister to deny the facts. To the astonishment of the other deputies, the Minister did not deny the facts, but declined to make any statement.

The incident created an immense sensation in the Reichstag Committee, and was possibly one of the factors underlying the recent political crisis. The fact that Herr Haase has now raised the matter in public seems to indicate that he and his friends consider that the time has come to bring the full truth to light.

A MEMORANDUM BY DR. MÜHLON, A DIRECTOR OF KRUPP'S TILL TOWARDS THE END OF 1914 [1]

Times, March 28, 1918

[See *Diplomatic*, I, p. 327]

In the middle of July 1914, I had, as I frequently had, a conversation with Dr. Helfferich, then director of the Deutsche Bank in Berlin, and now Vice-Chancellor. The Deutsche Bank had adopted a negative attitude towards certain large transactions in Bulgaria and Turkey, in which the firm of Krupp, for business reasons—delivery of war material—had a lively interest. As one of the reasons to justify the attitude of the Deutsche Bank, Dr. Helfferich finally gave me the following reason :—

'The political situation has become very menacing. The Deutsche Bank must in any case wait before entering into any further engagements abroad. The Austrians have just been with the Kaiser. In a week's time Vienna will send a very severe ultimatum to Serbia, with a very short interval for the answer. The ultimatum will contain demands such as punishment of a number of officers, dissolution of political associa-

[1] [Extract; the memorandum was originally published by the *Berliner Tageblatt* of March 21, 1918.]

tions, criminal investigations in Serbia by Austrian officials, and, in fact, a whole series of definite satisfactions will be demanded at once ; otherwise Austria-Hungary will declare war on Serbia.'

Dr. Helfferich added that the Kaiser had expressed his decided approval of this procedure on the part of Austria-Hungary. He had said that he regarded a conflict with Serbia as an internal affair between these two countries, in which he would permit no other State to interfere. If Russia mobilised, he would mobilise also. But in his case mobilisation meant immediate war. This time there would be no oscillation. Helfferich said that the Austrians were extremely well satisfied at this determined attitude on the part of the Kaiser. . . .

After my return from Berlin I informed Herr Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach, one of whose directors I then was at Essen. Dr. Helfferich had given me permission, and at that time the intention was to make him a director at Krupp's. Herr von Bohlen seemed disturbed that Dr. Helfferich was in possession of such information, and he made a remark to the effect that the Government people can never keep their mouths shut. He then told me the following. He said that he had himself been with the Kaiser in the last few days. The Kaiser had spoken to him also of his conversation with the Austrians, and of its result ; but he had described the matter as so secret that he (Krupp) would not even have dared to inform his own directors. As, however, I already knew, he could tell me that Helfferich's statements were accurate. Indeed, Helfferich seemed to know more details than he did. He said that the situation was really very serious. The Kaiser had told him that he would declare war immediately if Russia mobilised, and that this time people would see that he did not turn about. The Kaiser's repeated insistence that this time nobody would be able to accuse him of indecision had, he said, been almost comic in its effect.

On the very day indicated to me by Helfferich the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia appeared. . . .

TOUL AND VERDUN AS GUARANTEE OF NEUTRALITY

Telegram from the Imperial German Chancellor, Herr von Bethmann Hollweg, to Baron von Schoen, German Ambassador at Paris.

(Translation)

[Cf. *Diplomatic*, 2, p. 161]

Russia has ordered mobilisation of her entire army and fleet, therefore also against us, in spite of our still pending mediation, and although we ourselves have taken no measures of mobilisation. We have therefore declared the state of danger of war, which is bound to be followed by mobilisation unless Russia stops within twelve hours all measures of war against us and Austria. Mobilisation inevitably implies war. Please ask French Government whether it intends to remain neutral in a Russo-German war. Reply must follow within eighteen hours. Wire at once hour of inquiry. Utmost speed necessary.

If, contrary to expectation, French Government declares that it will remain neutral, your Excellency will please declare to the French Government that we must demand as guarantee of neutrality the handing over of the fortresses of Toul and Verdun, which we should occupy, and hand back on the conclusion of the war with Russia.

Reply to this last question must be here before four o'clock on Saturday afternoon. BETHMANN HOLLWEG.

[The first portion of this despatch—the first paragraph—was published in the French *Yellow Book* in 1914 (see *Diplomatic*, 1, p. 382). The second portion was made public for the first time by M. Stephen Pichon, French Minister for Foreign Affairs, in a speech at the Sorbonne, Paris, on March 1, 1918.]

4]

DESPATCHES FROM BRITISH EYE-WITNESS

THE FOLLOWING NARRATIVE OF EVENTS WAS COMPILED BY A MILITARY EYE-WITNESS ATTACHED TO THE GENERAL HEADQUARTERS OF THE BRITISH ARMY IN FRANCE.[1]

September 6—*September* 10, 1914

It will be remembered that the general position of our troops on Sunday, September 6, was stated to be south of the Marne, with French forces in line on our right and left. Practically there had been no change in the situation since Thursday, the 3rd, which marked the end of our Army's long retirement from the Belgian frontier through Northern France. [All taken from *The Times*]

On Friday, the 4th, it became apparent that there was an alteration in the direction of advance of almost the whole of the 1st German Army. That army since the battle near Mons on August 23 had been playing its part in the colossal strategic endeavour to create a Sedan for the Allies by outflanking and enveloping the left of their whole line so as to encircle and drive both British and French to the south. There was now a change in its objective ; and it was observed that the German forces opposite the British were beginning to move in a south-easterly direction instead of continuing south-west on to the Capital.

Leaving a strong rearguard along the line of the river Ourcq (which flows south and joins the Marne at Lizy-sur-Ourcq) to keep off the French 6th Army, which by then had been formed and was to the north-west of Paris, they were evidently executing what amounted to a flank march diagon-

[1] [These despatches from the British 'Eye-witness' were from time to time officially supplied to the daily press of the United Kingdom. The year 1914 is covered in this volume. A few passages which have no military or permanent interest have here been eliminated.]

ally across our front. Prepared to ignore the British, as being driven out of the fight, they were initiating an effort to attack the left flank of the French main army, which stretched in a long curved line from our right towards the east, and so to carry out against it alone the envelopment which had so far failed against the combined forces of the Allies.

On Saturday, the 5th, this movement on the part of the Germans was continued, and large advanced parties crossed the Marne southwards at Trilport, Sammeroy, La Ferté-sous-Jouarre and Château-Thierry. There was considerable fighting with the French 5th Army on the French left, which fell back from its position south of the Marne towards the Seine. On Sunday large hostile forces crossed the Marne, and pushed on through Coulommiers past the British right. Further east they were attacked at night by the French 5th Army, which captured three villages at the point of the bayonet.

On Monday, the 7th, there was a general advance on the part of the Allies in this quarter of the field. Our forces, which had by now been reinforced, pushed on in a north-easterly direction, in co-operation with an advance of the French 5th Army to the north and of the French 6th Army eastwards, against the German rearguard along the Ourcq.

Possibly weakened by the detachment of troops to the eastern theatre of operations, and realising that the action of the French 6th Army against the line of the Ourcq and the advance of the British placed their own flanking movement in considerable danger of being taken in rear and on its right flank, the Germans on this day commenced to retire towards the north-east. This was the first time that these troops had turned back since their attack at Mons a fortnight before, and, from reports received, the order to retreat when so close to Paris was a bitter disappointment. From letters found on the dead there is no doubt that there was a general impression amongst the enemy's troops that they were about to enter Paris.

On Tuesday, the 8th, the German movement north-eastwards was continued, their rearguards on the south of the Marne being pressed back to that river by our troops and by the French on our right, the latter capturing three villages after a hand-to-hand fight and the infliction of severe loss on the enemy.

The fighting along the Ourcq continued on this day and was of the most sanguinary character, for the Germans had massed a great force of artillery along this line. Very few of their infantry were seen by the French. The French 5th Army also made a fierce attack on the Germans in Montmirail, regaining that place.

On Wednesday, the 9th, the battle between the French 6th Army and what was now the German flank guard along the Ourcq continued. The British Corps, overcoming some resistance on the river Petit Morin, crossed the Marne in pursuit of the Germans, who were now hastily retreating northwards. One of our corps was delayed by an obstinate defence made by a strong rearguard with machine-guns at La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, where the bridge had been destroyed.

On Thursday, the 10th, the French 6th Army continued its pressure on the west, while the 5th Army, by forced marches reached the line Château-Thierry—Dormans on the Marne. Our troops also continued the pursuit on the north of the latter river, and after a considerable amount of fighting captured some 1500 prisoners, 4 guns, 6 machine-guns, and 50 transport wagons. Many of the enemy were killed and wounded, and the numerous thick woods which dot the country north of the Marne are filled with German stragglers. Most of them appear to have been without food for at least two days. Indeed, in this area of operations the Germans seem to be demoralised and inclined to surrender in small parties, and the general situation appears to be most favourable to the Allies.

Much brutal and senseless damage has been done in the villages occupied by the enemy. Property has been wantonly destroyed, pictures in the châteaux have been ripped up, and the houses generally pillaged. It is stated on unimpeachable authority, also, that the inhabitants have been much ill-treated.

Interesting incidents have occurred during the fighting. On the 10th part of our 2nd Army Corps advancing north found itself marching parallel with another infantry force at some little distance away. At first it was thought that this was another British unit. After some time, however, it was discovered that it was a body of Germans retreating. Measures were promptly taken to head off the enemy, who were sur-

rounded and trapped in a sunken road, where over 400 men surrendered.

On the 10th a small party of French under a non-commissioned officer was cut off and surrounded. After a desperate resistance it was decided to go on fighting to the end. Finally the N.C.O. and one man only were left, both being wounded. The Germans came up and shouted to them to lay down their arms. The German commander, however, signed to them to keep their arms, and then asked for permission to shake hands with the wounded non-commissioned officer, who was carried off on his stretcher with his rifle by his side.

The arrival of the reinforcements and the continued advance have delighted the troops, who are full of zeal and anxious to press on.

Quite one of the features of the campaign, on our side, has been the success attained by the Royal Flying Corps. In regard to the collection of information it is impossible either to award too much praise to our aviators for the way they have carried out their duties, or to overestimate the value of the intelligence collected, more especially during the recent advance. In due course, certain examples of what has been effected may be specified and the far-reaching nature of the results fully explained, but that time has not yet arrived. That the services of our Flying Corps, which has really been on trial, are fully appreciated by our Allies is shown by the following message from the Commander-in-Chief of the French Armies received on the night of September 9 by Field-Marshal Sir John French :—

> 'Please express most particularly to Marshal French my thanks for services rendered on every day by the English Flying Corps. The precision, exactitude, and regularity of the news brought in by its members are evidence of their perfect organisation and also of the perfect training of pilots and observers.'

To give a rough idea of the amount of work carried out it is sufficient to mention that, during a period of twenty days up to September 10, a daily average of more than nine reconnaissance flights of over a hundred miles each has been maintained.

The constant object of our aviators has been to effect the

accurate location of the enemy's forces, and, incidentally—since the operations cover so large an area—of our own units. Nevertheless, the tactics adopted for dealing with hostile aircraft are to attack them instantly with one or more British machines. This has been so far successful that in five cases German pilots or observers have been shot in the air and their machines brought to the ground. As a consequence, the British Flying Corps has succeeded in establishing an individual ascendancy which is as serviceable to us as it is damaging to the enemy. How far it is due to this cause it is not possible at present to ascertain definitely, but the fact remains that the enemy have recently become much less enterprising in their flights. Something in the direction of the mastery of the air has already been gained.

In pursuance of the principle that the main object of military aviators is the collection of information, bomb-dropping has not been indulged in to any great extent. On one occasion a petrol bomb was successfully exploded in a German bivouac at night, while, from a diary found on a dead German cavalry soldier, it has been discovered that a high-explosive bomb thrown at a cavalry column from one of our aeroplanes struck an ammunition wagon. The resulting explosion killed fifteen of the enemy.

September 10-13, 1914

Since Thursday, September 10, the Army has made steady progress in its endeavour to drive back the enemy in co-operation with the French. The country across which it has had to force its way, and will have to continue to do so, is undulating and covered with patches of thick wood. Within the area which faced the British before the advance commenced, right up to Laon, the chief feature of tactical importance is the fact that there are six rivers running right across the direction of advance, at all of which it was possible that the Germans might make resistance.

These are, in order from the south, the Marne, the Ourcq, the Vesle, the Aisne, the Ailette, and the Oise. The enemy held the line of the Marne, which was crossed by our forces on September 9, as a purely rearguard operation; our passage of the Ourcq, which here runs almost due east and west, was not contested; the Vesle was only lightly held;

while the resistance along the Aisne, both against French and British, has been and still is of a determined character.

The course of the operations during 11th, 12th, and 13th has been as follows. On Friday, the 11th, but little opposition was met with by us along any part of our front, and the direction of advance was, for the purpose of co-operating with our Allies, turned slightly to the north-west. The day was spent in pushing forward and in gathering in various hostile detachments, and by nightfall our forces had reached a line to the north of the Ourcq, extending from Oulchy-le-Château to Long Pont. On this day there was also a general advance on the part of the French along their whole line, which ended in substantial success, in one portion of the field Duke Albrecht of Wurtemberg's 4th Army being driven back across the Saulz, and elsewhere the whole of the corps artillery of a German corps being captured. Several German colours also were taken.

It was only on this day that the full extent of the victory gained by the Allies on the 8th was appreciated by them, and the moral effect of this success has been enormous. An order dated the 6th or 7th September, by the Commander of the German 7th Corps, was picked up, in which it was stated that the great object of the war was about to be attained, since the French were going to accept battle, and that upon the result of this battle would depend the issue of the war and the honour of the German armies.

It seems probable that the Germans not only expected to find that the British Army was beyond the power of assuming the offensive for some time, but counted on the French having been driven back on to the line of the Seine; and that, though surprised to find the latter moving forward against them after they had crossed the Marne, they were in nowise deterred from making a great effort.

On Saturday, the 12th, the enemy were found to be occupying a very formidable position opposite to us on the north of the Aisne. At Soissons they held both sides of the river and an entrenched line on the hills to the north. Of eight road bridges and two railway bridges crossing the Aisne within our section of front, seven of the former and both of the latter had been demolished. Working from west to east

our 3rd Army Corps gained some high ground south of the Aisne, overlooking the Aisne valley east of Soissons. Here a long range artillery duel between our guns and those of the French on our left and the enemy's artillery on the hills continued during the greater part of the day, and did not cease until nearly midnight. The enemy had a very large number of heavy howitzers in well-concealed positions. The movement of this Army Corps was effected in co-operation with that of the French 6th Army on our left, which gained the southern half of the town during the night. The 2nd Army Corps did not cross the Aisne.

The 1st Army Corps got over the river Vesle to the south of the Aisne, after the crossing had been secured by the 1st Cavalry Division. It then reached a line south of the Aisne, practically without fighting. At Braine the 1st Cavalry Division met with considerable opposition from infantry and machine-guns holding the town and guarding the bridge. With the aid of some of our infantry it gained possession of the town about midday, driving the enemy to the north. Some hundred prisoners were captured round Braine, where the Germans had thrown a large amount of field-gun ammunition into the river, where it was visible under two feet of water. On our right the French reached the line of the river Vesle.

On this day began the action along the Aisne which is not yet finished, and which may be merely of a rearguard nature on a large scale, or may be the commencement of a battle of a more serious nature. It rained heavily on Saturday afternoon and all through the night, which severely handicapped the transport.

On Sunday, the 13th, an extremely strong resistance was encountered along the whole of our front, which was some fifteen miles in length. The action still consisted for the most part of long-range gun fire, that of the Germans being to a great extent from their heavy howitzers, which were firing from cleverly concealed positions. Some of the actual crossings of the Aisne were guarded by strong detachments of infantry with machine-guns. By nightfall portions of all three corps were across the river, the cavalry returning to the south side. By this night or early next morning three pontoon bridges had been built, and our troops also

managed to get across the river by means of a bridge carrying the canal over the river, which had not been destroyed. On our left the French pressed on, but were prevented by artillery fire from building a pontoon bridge at Soissons. A large number of infantry, however, crossed in single file on the top of one girder of the railway bridge which was left standing.

During the last three or four days many isolated parties of Germans have been discovered hiding in the numerous woods a long way behind our line. As a rule they seem glad to surrender, and the condition of some of them may be gathered from the following incident. An officer, who was proceeding along the road in charge of a number of led horses, received information that there were some of the enemy in the neighbourhood. Upon seeing them he gave the order to charge, whereupon 3 German officers and 106 men surrendered.

The following are some of the details of the conduct of the enemy in occupation of three of the small towns to the north of Paris :—

At Senlis it is stated, on what appears to be good authority, that a poacher shot one German soldier and wounded another as the forces entered the town. The German commander then assembled the Mayor of the town and five other leading citizens and forced them to kneel before graves which had already been dug. Requisition was made for various supplies, and the six citizens were then taken to a neighbouring field and shot. According to the corroborative evidence of several independent persons, some twenty-four people, including women and children, were also shot. The town was then pillaged, and was fired in several places before it was evacuated. It is believed that the cathedral was not damaged, but many houses were destroyed.

Creil was also thoroughly pillaged and many houses were burnt.

At Crépy on September 3 various articles were requisitioned under threat of a fine of 100,000 f. for every day's delay in the delivery of the goods. The following list shows the amounts and natures of the supplies demanded, and also the actual quantities furnished :

Requisitioned.	Furnished.
Flour, 20,000 kilos	20,000 kilos.
Dried vegetables, 5000 kilos	800 ,,
Coffee, 1000 kilos	809 ,,
Salt, 1000 kilos	2,000 ,,
Oats, 100,000 kilos	55,000 ,,
Red wine, 2500 litres	2,500 litres.
All smoked meats, ham, cloth, new boots, tobacco, biscuits, handkerchiefs, shirts, braces, stockings, horseshoes, bicycles, motor-cars, petrol.	61 prs. of boots. 91 bicycles. 15 motor tyres. 6 inner tubes.

Immediately on arrival a proclamation was issued by the commander of the German division. The main points were: That all arms were to be handed in at the Town Hall at once. That all civilians found with arms would be shot at once. That no person was to be in the street after dark. That no lights were to be maintained in the houses or streets at night. That the doors of all houses were to be left open. That the inhabitants were not to collect in groups. That any obstruction of the German troops or threatening of them would be immediately punished by death. That German money was to be accepted at the rate of 1 mark for 1.25 f.

At Villers-Cotterets the Mayor appears to have behaved very judiciously, and, though supplies far in excess of the capabilities of the place were demanded, the town was not seriously damaged. The Germans evacuated the place on September 11 in such haste that they left behind a large amount of the bread requisitioned. It was stated by the inhabitants that the enemy destroyed and abandoned fifteen motor-lorries, seven guns and ammunition wagons.

Reims was occupied by the enemy on September 3. It was reoccupied by the French after considerable fighting on the 13th. On the 12th a proclamation, a copy of which is in possession of the British Army, was posted all over the town. A literal translation of this poster is given below.

PROCLAMATION

In the event of an action being fought either to-day or in the immediate future in the neighbourhood of Reims, or in the town itself, the inhabitants are warned that they must remain absolutely calm and must in no way try to take part in the fighting. They must not attempt to attack either isolated soldiers or detachments of the German Army. The erection of barricades, the taking up of paving stones in the streets in a way to hinder the movements of troops, or, in a word, any action that may embarrass the German Army, is formally forbidden.

With a view to securing adequately the safety of the troops and to instil calm into the population of Reims, the persons named below have been seized as hostages by the Commander-in-Chief of the German Army. These hostages will be hanged at the slightest attempt at disorder. Also the town will be totally or partly burnt, and the inhabitants will be hanged for any infraction of the above.

By order of the German authorities.

THE MAYOR (Dr. Langlet).

REIMS, *September* 12, 1914.

[Here follow the names of eighty-one of the principal inhabitants of Reims, with their addresses, including four priests, ending with the words 'and some others.']

September 14-17

At the date of the last narrative—on the 14th September—the Germans were making a determined resistance along the river Aisne. The opposition, which it was at first thought might possibly be of a rearguard nature not entailing material delay to our progress, has developed, and has proved to be more serious than was anticipated. The action now being fought by the Germans along their line may, it is true, have been undertaken in order to gain time for some strategic operation or move, and may not be their main stand.

But if this be so, the fighting is naturally on a scale which, as to extent of ground covered and duration of resistance, makes it indistinguishable in its progress from what is known

as a 'pitched battle,' though the enemy certainly showed signs of considerable disorganisation during the earlier days of their retirement. Whether it was originally intended by them to defend the position they took up as strenuously as they have done, or whether the delay gained for them during the 12th and 13th by their artillery has enabled them to develop their resistance and to reinforce their line to an extent not originally contemplated, cannot yet be said.

So far as we are concerned, the action still being contested is the Battle of the Aisne, for we are fighting just across that river along the whole of our front. To the east and west the struggle is not confined to the valley of that river, though it will probably bear its name. The progress of our operations and of those French Armies nearest to us for the 14th, 15th, 16th, and 17th will now be described.

On Monday, the 14th, those of our troops which had on the previous day crossed the Aisne, after driving in the German rearguard on that evening, found portions of the enemy's forces in prepared defensive positions on the plateau on the right bank, and could do little more than secure a footing north of the river. This, however, they maintained in spite of two counter-attacks, delivered at dusk and at 10 P.M., in which the fighting was severe.

During the 14th strong reinforcements of our troops were passed to the north bank, the troops crossing by ferry, by pontoon bridges, and by the remains of the permanent bridges. Close co-operation with the French forces was maintained, and the general progress made was good. Although the opposition was vigorous and the state of the roads after the heavy rain made movements slow, one division alone failed to secure the ground it expected to. The 1st Army Corps, after repulsing repeated attacks, captured 600 prisoners and 12 guns; the cavalry also took a number of prisoners. Many of the Germans taken belong to Reserve and Landwehr formations, which fact appears to indicate that the enemy is compelled to draw on the older classes of soldiers to fill the gaps in his ranks.

There was heavy rain throughout the night of the 14th-15th, and during the 15th September the situation of the British forces underwent no essential change, but it became more and more evident that the defensive preparations made

by the enemy were more extensive than was at first apparent. In order to counterbalance these, measures were taken by us to economise troops and to secure protection from the hostile artillery fire, which was very fierce, and our men continued to improve their own entrenchments.

The Germans bombarded our lines nearly all day, using heavy guns, brought no doubt from before Maubeuge, as well as those with the corps. All their counter-attacks, however, failed, although in some places they were repeated six times; one made on the 4th Guards Brigade was repulsed with heavy slaughter. An attempt to advance slightly made by part of our line was unsuccessful as regards gain in ground, but led to withdrawal of part of the enemy's infantry and artillery. Further counter-attacks made during the night were beaten off. Rain came on towards evening and continued intermittently until 9 A.M. on the 16th. Besides adding to the discomfort of the soldiers holding open trenches in the firing line, the wet weather to some extent hampered the motor transport service, which was also hindered by the broken bridges.

On Wednesday, the 16th, there was little change in the situation opposite the British. The efforts made by the enemy were less active than on the previous day, though their bombardment continued throughout the morning and evening. Our artillery fire broke the defenders off one of the salients of their position, but they returned in the evening. Forty prisoners were taken by the 3rd Division.

On Thursday, the 17th, the situation still remained unchanged in its essentials. The German heavy artillery fire was more active than on the previous day. The only infantry attacks made by the enemy were on the extreme right of our position, and, as had happened before, were repulsed with heavy loss, chiefly on this occasion by our field artillery.

In order to convey some idea of the nature of the fighting, it may be said that along the greater part of our front the Germans have been driven back from the forward slopes on the north of the river. Their infantry are holding strong lines of trenches amongst and along the edges of the numerous woods which crown these slopes. These trenches are elaborately constructed and cleverly concealed. In many places there are wire entanglements and lengths of rabbit fencing both in the woods and in the open, carefully aligned so that

they can be swept by rifle fire and machine-guns, which are invisible from our side of the valley. The ground in front of the infantry trenches is also as a rule under cross fire from field artillery placed on neighbouring features and under high-angle fire from pieces placed well back behind woods on top of the plateau.

A feature of this action, as of the previous fights, is the use made by the enemy of their numerous heavy howitzers, with which they are able to direct a long-range fire all over the valley and right across it. Upon these they evidently place great reliance. Where our men are holding the forward edges of the high ground on the north side they are now strongly entrenched. They are well fed, and in spite of the wet weather of the past week are cheerful and confident. The bombardment by both sides has been very heavy, and on Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday was practically continuous.

Nevertheless, in spite of the general din caused by the reports of the immense number of heavy guns in action along our front on Wednesday, the arrival of a French force acting against the German right flank was at once announced on the east of our front some miles away by the continuous roar of their quick-firing artillery with which their attack was opened. So far as the British are concerned, the greater part of this week has been passed in bombardment, in gaining ground by degrees, and in beating back severe counter-attacks with heavy slaughter. Our casualties have been severe, but it is probable that those of the enemy are heavier. The rain has caused a great drop in temperature, and there is more than a distinct feeling of autumn in the air, especially in the early mornings.

On our right and left the French have been fighting fiercely and have also been gradually gaining ground. One village has already during this battle been captured and recaptured twice by each side, and at the time of writing remains in the hands of the Germans. The fighting has been at close quarters and of the most desperate nature, and the streets of the village are filled with the dead of both sides.

The Germans are a formidable enemy. Well trained, long prepared, and brave, their soldiers are carrying on the contest with skill and valour. Nevertheless they are fighting to win

anyhow, regardless of all the rules of fair play, and there is evidence that they do not hesitate at anything in order to gain victory. A large number of the tales of their misbehaviour are exaggerations, and some of the stringent precautions they have taken to guard themselves against the inhabitants of the areas traversed are possibly justifiable measures of war. But at the same time it has been definitely established that they have committed atrocities on many occasions, and they have been guilty of brutal conduct.

So many letters and statements of our own wounded soldiers have been published in our newspapers that the following epistle from a German soldier of the 74th Infantry Regiment (10th Corps) to his wife may also be of interest :—

My dear Wife,—I have just been living through days that defy imagination. I should never have thought that men could stand it. Not a second has passed but my life has been in danger, and yet not a hair of my head has been hurt. It was horrible, it was ghastly. But I have been saved for you and for our happiness, and I take heart again, although I am still terribly unnerved. God grant that I may see you again soon, and that this horror may soon be over. None of us can do any more, human strength is at an end.

I will try to tell you about it :—

On the 5th September the enemy were reported to be taking up a position near St. Prix (N.E. of Paris). The 10th Corps, which had made an astonishingly rapid advance, of course, attacked on the Sunday.

Steep slopes led up to heights which were held in considerable force. With our weak detachments of the 74th and 91st Regiments we reached the crest and came under a terrible artillery fire that mowed us down. However, we entered St. Prix. Hardly had we done so than we were met with shell fire and a violent fusillade from the enemy's infantry. Our Colonel was badly wounded—he is the third we have had. Fourteen men were killed round me. . . . We got away in a lull without being hit.

. . . . . .

The 7th, 8th, and 9th of September we were constantly under shell and shrapnel fire, and suffered terrible losses. I was in a house which was hit several times. The fear of a death of agony which is in every man's heart, and naturally so, is a terrible feeling.

How often I thought of you, my darling, and what I suffered in that terrifying battle, which extended along a front of many miles near

Montmirail, you cannot possibly imagine. Our heavy artillery was being used for the siege of Maubeuge ; we wanted it badly, as the enemy had theirs in force and kept up a furious bombardment. For four days I was under artillery fire. It is like Hell, but a thousand times worse. On the night of the 9th the order was given to retreat, as it would have been madness to attempt to hold our position with our few men, and we should have risked a terrible defeat the next day. The 1st and 3rd Armies had not been able to attack with us, as we had advanced too rapidly.

Our *moral* was absolutely broken.

In spite of unheard-of sacrifices we had achieved nothing. I cannot understand how our Army, after fighting three great battles and being terribly weakened, was sent against a position which the enemy had prepared for three weeks, but naturally I know nothing of the intentions of our Chiefs. . . . They say nothing has been lost. In a word, we retired towards Cormontreuil and Reims by forced marches by day and night. We hear that three armies are going to get into line, entrench, rest, and then start afresh our victorious march on Paris. It was not a defeat, but only a strategic retreat. I have confidence in our Chiefs that everything will be successful. Our first battalion, which has fought with unparalleled bravery, is reduced from 1200 to 194 men. These numbers speak for themselves. . . .

Amongst minor happenings of interest is the following :—

During a counter-attack by the German 53rd Regiment on portions of the Northampton and Queen's Regiments on Thursday, the 17th, a force of some four hundred of the enemy were allowed to approach right up to the trench, occupied by a platoon of the former regiment, owing to the fact that they had held up their hands and made gestures that were interpreted as signs that they wished to surrender. When they were actually on the parapet of the trench they opened fire at our men at point blank range.

Unluckily for the enemy, however, flanking them and only some 400 yards away there happened to be a machine-gun manned by a detachment of the 'Queen's.' This at once opened fire, cutting a lane through their mass, and they fell back to their own trench with great loss. Shortly afterwards they were driven farther back with additional loss by a battalion of the Guards which came up in support.

An incident which occurred some little time ago during our retirement is also worthy of record. On August 28, during the battle fought by the French along the Oise, be-

tween La Fère and Guise, one of the French commanders desired to make an air reconnaissance. It was found, however, that no observers were available. Wishing to help our Allies as much as possible, the British officer attached to this particular French Army volunteered to go up with a pilot to observe. He had never been in an aeroplane, but he made the ascent and produced a valuable reconnaissance report. Incidentally he had a duel in the air at an altitude of 6000 feet with the observer of a German Taube monoplane which approached. He fired several shots and drove off the hostile aeroplane. His action was much appreciated by the French.

In view of the many statements being made in the Press as to the use of Zeppelins against us, it is interesting to note that the Royal Flying Corps, who have been out on reconnaissances on every day since their arrival in France, have never seen a Zeppelin, though airships of a non-rigid type have been seen on two occasions. Near the Marne, late one evening, two such were observed over the German forces. Aeroplanes were despatched against them, but in the darkness our pilots were uncertain of the airships' nationality and did not attack. It was afterwards made clear that they could not have been French. A week later, an officer reconnoitring to the flank saw an airship over the German forces and opposite the French. It had no distinguishing mark and was assumed to belong to the latter, though it is now known that it also must have been a German craft. The orders of the Royal Flying Corps are to attack Zeppelins at once, and there is some disappointment at the absence of those targets.

September 18-20.

The enemy is still maintaining himself along the whole front; and in order to do so is throwing into the fight detachments composed of units from very different formations—the Active Army, the Reserve, and the Landwehr—as is shown by the uniforms of the prisoners recently captured. Our progress, although slow, on account of the strength of the defensive positions against which we are pressing, has in certain directions been continuous. But the present battle may well last for some days more before a decision is reached,

since, in truth, it now approximates somewhat to siege warfare. The Germans are making use of searchlights, and this fact, coupled with their great strength in heavy artillery, leads to the supposition that they are employing material which may have been collected for the siege of Paris.

The nature of the general situation after the operations of the 18th, the 19th, and the 20th, cannot better be summarised than as expressed recently by a neighbouring French commander to his corps :—

'Having repulsed repeated and violent counter-attacks made by the enemy . . . we have the feeling that we have been victorious.'

So far as the British are concerned, the course of events during these three days can be described in a few words. During Friday, the 18th, artillery fire was kept up intermittently by both sides during daylight. At night the Germans counter-attacked certain portions of our line, supporting the advance of their infantry, as always, by heavy bombardment ; but the strokes were not delivered with any great vigour, and ceased about 2 A.M. During the day's fighting an anti-aircraft gun of the 3rd Army Corps succeeded in bringing down a German aeroplane. News was received also that a body of French cavalry had demolished part of the railway to the north, so cutting—at least temporarily—one line of communication which is of particular importance to the enemy.

On Saturday, the 19th, the bombardment was resumed by the Germans at an early hour, and continued intermittently under reply from our own guns. Some of their infantry advanced from cover, apparently with the intention of attacking, but on coming under fire they retired. Otherwise the day was uneventful except for the activity of the artillery, which is now a matter of normal routine rather than an event. Another hostile aeroplane was brought down by us ; and one of our airmen succeeded in dropping several bombs over the German lines, one incendiary bomb falling with considerable effect on a transport park near La Fère. A buried store of the enemy's munitions of war was also found not far from the Aisne, ten wagons-loads of live shell and two wagons of cable being dug up ; and traces were discovered of large quantities

of stores having been burnt, all tending to show that so far back as the Aisne the German retirement was hurried. There was a strong wind during the day, accompanied by driving rain, and this militated against aerial reconnaissance.

On Sunday, the 20th, nothing of importance occurred until the afternoon, when there was a break in the clouds and an interval of feeble sunshine which, however, was hardly powerful enough to warm the soaking troops. The Germans took advantage of this brief spell of fine weather to make several separate counter-attacks against different points. These were all repulsed with loss to the enemy; but the casualties incurred by us were by no means light. In one section of our firing line the occupants of the trenches were under the impression that they heard a military band in the enemy's lines just before the attack developed. It is now known that the German infantry started their advance with bands playing. The offensive against one or two points was renewed at dusk with no greater success.

The brunt of the resistance has naturally fallen upon the infantry. In spite of the fact that they have been drenched to the skin for some days and their trenches have been deep in mud and water, and in spite of incessant night alarms, and of the almost continuous bombardment to which they have been subjected, they have on every occasion been ready for the enemy's infantry when the latter have attempted to assault, and they have beaten them back with great loss. Indeed, the sight of the *Pickelhauben* coming up has been a positive relief after the long, trying hours of inaction under shell-fire. The object of the great proportion of artillery the Germans employ is to beat down the resistance of their enemy by a concentrated and prolonged fire, and to shatter their nerve with high explosives before the infantry attack is launched. They seem to have relied on doing this with us; but they have not done so, though it has taken them several costly experiments to discover this fact. From the statements of prisoners, indeed, it appears that they have been greatly disappointed by the moral effect produced by their heavy guns, which, despite the actual losses inflicted, has not been at all commensurate with the colossal expenditure of ammunition, which has really been wasted.

By this it is not implied that their artillery fire is not good.

It is more than good ; it is excellent. But the British soldier is a difficult person to impress or depress, even by immense shells filled with high explosives which detonate with terrific violence, and form craters large enough to act as graves for five horses. The German howitzer shells are 8 to 9 inches in calibre, and on impact they send up columns of greasy black smoke. On account of this they are irreverently dubbed 'Coal-boxes,' 'Black Marias,' or 'Jack Johnsons,' by the soldiers. Men who take things in this spirit are, it seems, likely to throw out the calculations based on loss of *moral* so carefully framed by the German military philosophers.

A considerable amount of information about the enemy has by now been gleaned from prisoners. It has been gathered that our bombardment on the 15th produced a great impression. The opinion is also recorded that our infantry make such good use of the ground that the German companies are decimated by our rifle fire before a British soldier can be seen. From an official diary captured by the 1st Army Corps it appears that one of the German Corps contains an extraordinary mixture of units. If the composition of the other corps is at all similar, it may be assumed that the present efficiency of the enemy's forces is in no way comparable with what it was when war commenced. The losses in officers are noted as having been especially severe. A brigade is stated to be commanded by a major, and some companies of the Foot Guards to be commanded by one-year volunteers, while after the battle of Montmirail one regiment lost fifty-five out of sixty officers.

The prisoners recently captured appreciate the fact that the march on Paris has failed, and that their forces are retreating, but state that the object of this movement is explained by the officers as being to withdraw into closer touch with supports which have stayed too far in rear. The officers are also endeavouring to encourage the troops by telling them that they will be at home by Christmas. A large number of the men, however, believe that they are beaten. The following is an extract from one document :—

'With the English troops we have great difficulties. They have a queer way of causing losses to the enemy. They make good trenches, in which they wait patiently. They carefully measure the ranges for their rifle fire, and they then open a truly hellish fire on the unsus-

pecting cavalry. This was the reason that we had such heavy losses. . . . According to our officers, the English striking forces are exhausted. The English people never really wanted war.'

From another source :—

'The English are very brave and fight to the last man. . . . One of our companies has lost 130 men out of 240.'

The following letter, which refers to the fighting on the Aisne, has been printed and circulated to the troops :—

LETTER FOUND ON A GERMAN OFFICER OF THE 7TH RESERVE CORPS

CERNY, S. OF LAON, *September* 17, 1914.

MY DEAR PARENTS,— . . . Our corps has the task of holding the heights south of Cerny in all circumstances till the 15th Corps on our left flank can grip the enemy's flank. On our right are other corps. We are fighting with the English Guards, Highlanders, and Zouaves. The losses on both sides have been enormous. For the most part this is due to the too brilliant French artillery. The English are marvellously trained in making use of the ground. One never sees them, and one is constantly under fire. The French airmen perform wonderful feats. We cannot get rid of them. As soon as an airman has flown over us, ten minutes later we get their shrapnel fire in our position. We have little artillery in our corps ; without it we cannot get forward.

Three days ago our division took possession of these heights, dug itself in, etc. Two days ago, early in the morning, we were attacked by immensely superior English forces (one brigade and two battalions), and were turned out of our positions ; the fellows took five guns from us. It was a tremendous hand-to-hand fight. How I escaped myself I am not clear. I then had to bring up supports on foot (my horse was wounded, and the others were too far in rear). Then came up the Guard Jäger Battalion, 4th Jäger, 65th Regiment, Reserve Regiment 13, Landwehr Regiments 13 and 16, and, with the help of the artillery, drove back the fellows out of the position again.

Our machine-guns did excellent work. The English fell in heaps.

In our battalion three Iron Crosses have been given, one to the C.O., one to the Captain, one to the Surgeon. Let us hope that we shall be the lucky ones next time. . . . During the first two days of the battle I had only one piece of bread and no water, spent the night in the rain without my greatcoat. The rest of my kit was on the horses, which have been left miles behind with the baggage (which cannot come up into the battle), because as soon as you put your nose out from behind

cover the bullets whistle. The war is terrible. We are all hoping that the decisive battle will end the war, as our troops have already got round Paris.

If we first beat the English, the French resistance will soon be broken. Russia will be very quickly dealt with, of this there is no doubt. We received splendid help from the Austrian heavy artillery at Maubeuge. They bombarded Fort Cerfontaine in such a way that there was not ten metres of parapet which did not show enormous craters made by shells. The armoured turrets were found upside down.

Yesterday evening about 6 P.M., in the valley in which our reserves stood, there was such a terrible cannonade that we saw nothing of the sky but a cloud of smoke. We had few casualties.

Amongst items of news are the following. Recently a pilot and observer of the Royal Flying Corps were forced by a breakage in the aeroplane to descend in the enemy's lines. The pilot managed to 'pancake' his machine down to earth, and the two escaped into some thick undergrowth in a wood. The enemy came up and seized the smashed machine, but did not search for our men with much zeal. The latter lay hid till dark, and then found their way to the Aisne, across which they swam, reaching camp in safety, but barefooted. Numerous floating bridges have by now been thrown across the Aisne, and some permanent bridges repaired, under fire. On the 20th a lieutenant of the 3rd Signal Company, Royal Engineers, was unfortunately drowned whilst attempting to swim across the river with a cable in order to open up fresh telegraph communication on the north side.

Espionage is still carried on by the enemy to a considerable extent. Recently the suspicions of some French troops were aroused by coming across a farm from which the horses had not been removed. After some search they discovered a telephone which was connected by an underground cable with the German lines; and the owner of the farm paid the penalty usual in war for his treachery.

After some cases of village fighting which occurred earlier in the war it was reported by some of our officers that the Germans had attempted to approach to close quarters by forcing prisoners to march in front of them. The Germans have recently repeated the same trick on a larger scale against the French, as is shown by the copy of the order printed below.

It is therein referred to as a 'ruse'; but if that term be accepted, it is distinctly an illegal ruse.

—— Army. September, 1914.
General Staff.
3rd Bureau.
No.

During a recent night attack the Germans drove a column of French prisoners in front of them.

This action is to be brought to the notice of all our troops :—

1. In order to put them on their guard against such a dastardly ruse :

2. In order that every soldier may know how the Germans treat their prisoners. Our troops must not forget that if they allow themselves to be taken prisoners the Germans will not fail to expose them to French bullets.

(Signature of Commander.)

Further evidence has now been collected of the misuse of the white flag and other signs of surrender during the action on the 17th, when owing to this one officer was shot. During the recent fighting also some German ambulance wagons advanced in order to collect the wounded. An order to cease fire was consequently given to our guns which were firing on this particular section of ground. The German battery commanders at once took advantage of the lull in the action to climb up their observation ladders, and on to a haystack to locate our guns, which soon afterwards came under a far more accurate fire than any to which they had been subjected up to that time.

A British officer who was captured by the Germans and has since escaped reports that while a prisoner he saw men who had been fighting subsequently put on Red Cross brassards. That the irregular use of the protection afforded by the Geneva Convention is not uncommon is confirmed by the fact that on one occasion men in the uniform of combatant units have been captured wearing the Red Cross brassard hastily slipped over the arm. The excuse given has been that they had been detailed after a fight to look after the wounded. It is reported by a cavalry officer that the driver of a motor-car with a machine-gun mounted on it, which he captured, was wearing the Red Cross.

Full details of the actual damage done to the Cathedral

at Reims will doubtless have been cabled home, so that no description of it is necessary. The Germans bombarded the cathedral twice with their heavy artillery. One reason why it caught alight so quickly was that on one side of it was some scaffolding which had been erected for restoration work. Straw had also been laid on the floor for the reception of German wounded. It is to the credit of the French that practically all the German wounded were successfully extricated from the burning building. There was no justification on military grounds for this act of vandalism, which seems to have been caused by the exasperation born of failure, a sign of impotence rather than of strength. It is noteworthy that a well-known hotel not far from the cathedral, which was kept by a German, was not touched.

September 21-22

For four days there has been a comparative lull all along our front. This has been accompanied by a spell of fine weather, though the nights are now much colder. One cannot have everything, however, and one evil result of the sunshine has been to release the flies which were torpid during the wet days. Advantage has been taken of the arrival of reinforcements to relieve by fresh troops the men who have been in the firing line for some time. Several units, therefore, have received their baptism of fire during the week.

Since the last letter left General Headquarters, evidence has been received which points to the fact that during the counter-attacks on the night of Sunday, the 20th, the German infantry fired into each other—the result of an attempt to carry out the dangerous expedient of a covering advance in the dark. Opposite one portion of our position a considerable massing of the hostile forces was observed before dark, and some hours later a furious fusillade was heard in front of our line, though no bullets came over our trenches.

This narrative begins with the 21st and covers only two days. On Monday, the 21st, there was but little rain, and the weather took the turn for the better, which has been maintained. Action was practically confined to the artillery, our guns at one point shelling and driving away the enemy, who were endeavouring to construct a redoubt. The Germans for their part expended a large number of heavy shell in a long-

range bombardment of the village of Missy. Reconnoitring parties sent out during the night of the 21st-22nd discovered some deserted trenches, and in them, or near them in the woods, over one hundred dead and wounded were picked up. A number of rifles, ammunition, and equipment were also found. There were various other signs that portions of the enemy's forces had withdrawn for some distance.

Tuesday, the 22nd, was also fine, with less wind, and was one of the most uneventful days that has passed since we reached the Aisne—uneventful, that is, for the British. There was less artillery work on either side, the Germans nevertheless giving the village of Paissy a taste of the 'Jack Johnsons.' The spot thus honoured is not far from a ridge where some of the most severe close fighting in which we have taken part has occurred. All over this 'No man's land' between the lines, the bodies of the German infantry are still lying in heaps where they have fallen at different times.

Espionage plays so large a part in the conduct of war by the Germans that it is difficult to avoid reference to the subject. They have evidently never forgotten the saying of Frederick the Great: 'When Marshal Soubise goes to war he is followed by a hundred cooks. When I take the field I am preceded by a hundred spies.' Indeed, until about twenty years ago there was a paragraph in the Field Service Regulations directing that the service of 'protection in the field,' *e.g.* outposts and advanced guards, should always be supplemented by a system of espionage. Though such instructions are no longer made public, the Germans, as is well known, still carry them into effect.

Apart from the more elaborate arrangements which were made in peace time for obtaining information by paid agents, some of the methods being employed for the collection or conveyance of intelligence are as follows:—

Men in plain clothes signal to the German lines from points in the hands of the enemy by means of coloured lights at night and puffs of smoke from chimneys by day. Pseudo-labourers working in the fields between the armies have been detected conveying information, and persons in plain clothes have acted as advanced scouts to the German cavalry when advancing. German officers and soldiers in plain clothes, or in French or British uniforms, have remained in localities evacuated by

the Germans in order to furnish them with intelligence. One spy of this kind was found by our troops hidden in a church tower. His presence was only discovered through the erratic movements of the hands of the church clock, which he was using to signal to his friends by means of an improvised semaphore code. Had this man not been seized it is probable that he would have signalled to the German artillery the time of arrival and the exact location of the Headquarters and Staff of the force. High-explosive shells would then have mysteriously dropped on to the building. Women spies have also been caught, and secret agents have been found at rail-heads observing entrainments and detrainments.

It is a simple matter for spies to mix with the numbers of refugees moving about to and from their homes, and difficult for our troops, who speak neither French nor German, to detect them. The French have found it necessary to search villages and also the casual wayfarers on the roads for carrier pigeons. Amongst the precautions taken by us to guard against spying is the publication of the following notice, copies of which have been printed in French and posted up:

(1) Motor-cars and bicycles other than those carrying soldiers in uniform may not circulate on the roads.

(2) Inhabitants may not leave the localities in which they reside between 6 P.M. and 6 A.M.

(3) Inhabitants may not quit their homes after 8 P.M.

(4) No person may on any pretext pass through the British lines without an authorisation countersigned by a British officer.

Events have moved so quickly during the last two months that anything connected with the mobilisation of the British Expeditionary Force is now ancient history. Nevertheless, the following extract of a German order is evidence of the mystification of the enemy and is a tribute to the value of the secrecy which was so well and loyally maintained at the time in England.

'10th Reserve Army Corps,
'Headquarters Mont St. Guibert,
'20*th August* 1914, 23.40.

'CORPS ORDER, 21ST AUGUST

'The French troops in front of the 10th Army Corps have

retreated south across the Sambre. Part of the Belgian Army has withdrawn to Antwerp. It is reported that an English Army has disembarked at Calais and Boulogne *en route* for Brussels.'

September 23-24

Wednesday, the 23rd, was a perfect autumn day. It passed without incident as regards major operations, though the enemy concentrated their heavy artillery fire upon the plateau near Paissy. Nothing more than inconvenience, however, was caused. The welcome absence of wind gave our airmen a chance of which they took full advantage, gathering much information.

Unfortunately one of our aviators, who has been particularly active in annoying the enemy by dropping bombs, was wounded in a duel in the air. Being alone on a single-seater monoplane, he was not able to use a rifle, and whilst circling above a German two-seater in an endeavour to get within pistol shot, was hit by the observer of the latter, who was armed with a rifle. He managed to fly back over our lines, and by great good luck descended close to a motor-ambulance, which at once conveyed him to hospital. Against this may be set off the fact that another of our fliers exploded a bomb amongst some led artillery horses, killing several and stampeding others.

On Thursday, the 24th, the fine weather continued, as did the lull in the action, the heavy German shells falling mostly near Pargnan. On both Wednesday and Thursday the weather was so fine that many flights were made by the aviators of the French, the British, and the Germans, producing corresponding activity amongst the anti-aircraft guns.

So still and clear was the atmosphere towards evening on Wednesday and during the whole of Thursday, that to those not specially on the look-out the presence of aeroplanes high up above them was first made known by the bursting of the projectiles aimed at them. The puffs of smoke from the detonating shell hung in the air for minutes on end like balls of fleecy cotton-wool before they slowly expanded and were dissipated.

From the places mentioned as being the chief targets for the enemy's heavy howitzers, it will be seen that the Germans are now inclined to concentrate their fire systematically upon definite areas in which their aviators think they have located our guns, or upon villages where it is imagined our troops may be billeted. The result will be to give work to the local builders.

The growing resemblance of this battle to siege warfare has already been pointed out. The fact that the later actions of the Russo-Japanese war assumed a similar character was thought by many to have been due to exceptional causes, such as the narrowness of the theatre of operations between the Chinese frontier on the west and the mountainous country of Northern Korea on the east, and the lack of roads, which limited the extent of ground over which it was possible for the rival armies to manœuvre, and the fact that both forces were tied to one line of railway.

No such factors are exerting any influence on the present battle. Nevertheless a similar situation has been produced, owing, first, to the immense power of resistance possessed by an army which is amply equipped with heavy artillery and has sufficient time to fortify itself ; and, secondly, to the vast size of the forces engaged, which at present stretch more than half across France. The extent of country covered is so great as to render slow any efforts to manœuvre and march round to a flank in order to escape the costly expedient of a frontal attack against heavily fortified positions. To state that methods of attack must approximate more closely to those of siege warfare, the greater the resemblance of the defences to those of a fortress is a platitude ; but it is one which will bear repetition if it in any way assists to make the present situation clear.

There is no doubt that the position on the Aisne was not hastily selected by the German Staff after the retreat had begun. From the choice of ground, and the care with which the fields of fire have been arranged to cover all possible avenues of approach, and from the amount of work already carried out, it is clear that the contingency of having to act on the defensive was not overlooked when the details of the strategically offensive campaign were arranged.

September 25-29

The general situation as viewed on the map remains practically the same as that described in the last letter ; and the task of the Army has not changed. It is to maintain itself until the general resumption of the offensive. No ground has been lost, some has been gained, and every counter-attack has been repulsed, in certain instances with very severe loss to the enemy.

Nevertheless the question of position is only part of the battle, and there has been a considerable improvement in the situation in another important aspect. The recent offensive efforts of the enemy have been made without cohesion, the assaults being delivered by comparatively small bodies acting without co-operation with those on either side. Some of them, indeed, evince clear signs of inferior leadership, thus bearing out the statements made by prisoners as to the great losses in officers suffered by the enemy.

Further, the hostile artillery fire has decreased in volume and deteriorated both in control and direction. The first is probably due to a transfer of metal to other quarters, but the two latter may be a direct result of the activity of our aircraft and their interference with the enemy's air reconnaissance and observation of fire. Recently the Germans have been relying to some extent on observation from captive balloons sent up at some distance in rear of their first line, which method, whatever its cause, is a poor substitute for the direct overhead reconnaissance obtainable from aeroplanes.

As a consequence the damage being done to us is wholly disproportionate to the amount of ammunition expended by the enemy. For the last few days it has amounted to pitting certain areas with large craters and in rendering some villages 'unhealthy'—as the soldiers put it. A concrete example of what was on one occasion achieved against our infantry trenches is given later.

Of recent events the actual narrative will be carried on from the 25th to the 29th inclusive. During the whole of this period the weather has remained fine, though not so bright as it was. On Friday, the 25th, comparative quiet reigned in our sphere of action, the only incident worthy of special mention being the passage of a German aeroplane over the

interior of our lines. It was flying high, but drew a general fusillade from below, with the result that the pilot was killed outright and the observer was wounded. By the aid of dual control, however, the latter continued his flight for some miles. He was then forced to descend by a hit in his petrol tank and was captured by the French.

That night a general attack was made against the greater part of the Allies' position, and it was renewed in the early morning of the 26th. The Germans were everywhere repulsed with loss. Indeed, opposite one portion of our line, where they were caught in mass by our machine-guns and howitzers firing at different ranges, it is estimated that they left one thousand killed and wounded.

The mental attitude of our troops may be gauged from the fact that the official report next morning from one corps —of which one division had borne the brunt of the fighting— ran thus laconically :

'. . . . The night was quiet, except for a certain amount of shelling both from the enemy and ourselves. At 3.40 A.M. an attack was made on our right. At 5 A.M. there was a general attack on the right of the —th Division, but not really heavy, and firing is dying down.'

Further ineffectual efforts to drive us back were made on Saturday, the 26th, at 8 A.M., and in the afternoon ; and artillery fire continued all day. The Germans came on in a T-shaped formation, several lines shoulder to shoulder, followed almost immediately by a column in support. After a very few minutes the men had closed up into a mob, which afforded an excellent target for our fire.

On Sunday, the 27th, whilst the German heavy guns were in action, their brass bands could be heard playing hymn tunes, presumably at Divine Service. The enemy made an unimportant advance on part of our line about 6 P.M., and renewed it in strength at one point at 11.30 P.M.—with no better success than on the previous night. Sniping continued all day along the whole front. On Monday, the 28th, there was nothing more severe than bombardment and intermittent sniping, and this inactivity continued during Tuesday, the 29th, except for a night attack against our extreme right.

An incident that occurred on Sunday, the 27th, serves to illustrate the type of fighting that has for the past two weeks

been going on intermittently in various parts of our line. It also brings out the extreme difficulty of ascertaining what is actually happening during an action, apart from what seems to be happening, and points to the value of good entrenchments. At a certain point in our front our advanced trenches on the north of the Aisne are not far from a village on the hillside and also within a short distance of the German works, being on the slope of a spur formed by a subsidiary valley running north and the main valley of the river.

It was a calm, sunny afternoon but hazy; and from a point of vantage south of the river it was difficult exactly to locate on the far bank the well-concealed trenches of either side. From far and near the sullen boom of guns echoed along the valley, and at intervals, in different directions, the sky was flecked with the almost motionless smoke of anti-aircraft shrapnel. Suddenly, without any warning, for the reports of the distant howitzers from which they were fired could not be distinguished from other distant reports, three or four heavy shells fell into the village, sending up huge clouds of smoke and dust which slowly descended in a brownish grey column. To this no reply was made by our side.

Shortly afterwards there was a quick succession of reports from a point some distance up the subsidiary valley on the side opposite our trenches, and therefore rather on their flank. It was not possible, either by ear or by eye, to locate the guns from which these sounds proceeded.

Almost simultaneously, as it seemed, there was a corresponding succession of flashes and sharp detonations in a line on the hillside along what appeared to be our trenches. There was then a pause, and several clouds of smoke rose slowly and remained stationary, spaced as regularly as a line of poplars. Again there was a succession of reports from the German quickfirers on the far side of the misty valley, and—like echoes—the detonations of high explosive and the row of expanding smoke clouds were prolonged by several new ones. Another pause, and silence, except for the noise in the distance. After a few minutes there was a roar from our side of the main valley as our field-guns opened one after another in a more deliberate fire upon the position of the German guns.

After six reports there was again silence, save for the whir

of the shell as they sang up the small valley, and then followed the flashes and balls of smoke—one, two, three, four, five, six, as the shrapnel burst nicely over what in the haze looked like some ruined buildings at the edge of a wood.

Again, after a short interval, the enemy's gunners reopened with a burst, still further prolonging the smoke, which was by now merged into one solid screen above a considerable length of trench, and again did our guns reply. And so the duel went on for some time. Ignoring our guns, the German artillerymen, probably relying on concealment for immunity, were concentrating all their efforts in a particularly forceful effort to enfilade our trenches. For them it must have appeared to be the chance of a lifetime, and with their customary prodigality of ammunition they continued to pour bouquet after bouquet of high-explosive *Einheitsgeschoss*, or combined shrapnel and common shell, on to our works. Occasionally, with a roar, a high-angle projectile would sail over the hill and blast a gap in the village. One could only pray that our men holding the trenches had dug themselves in deep and well, and that those in the village were in the cellars.

In the hazy valleys bathed in sunlight not a man, not a horse, not a gun, nor even a trench was to be seen. There were only flashes, smoke, and noise. Above, against the blue sky, were several round white clouds hanging in the track of the only two visible human souls—represented by a glistening speck in the air. On high also were to be heard the more or less gentle reports of the bursts of the anti-aircraft projectiles. But the deepest impression created was one of sympathy for the men subjected to the bursts along that trench.

Upon inquiry as to the losses sustained, however, it was found that our men had been able to take care of themselves and had dug themselves well in. In that collection of trenches on that Sunday afternoon were portions of four battalions of British soldiers—the Dorsets, the West Kents, the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, and the King's Own Scottish Borderers. Over three hundred projectiles were fired against them. The result was nine men wounded.

On the following day one hundred and nine shells were fired at the trenches occupied by the West Kent Regiment alone. Four officers were buried, but dug out unhurt. One man was scratched. The village itself was unoccupied.

September 30—October 2

It is always instructive to regard matters from the opposing point of view; and the following further extracts from the letters of prisoners may be of interest :—

'In all places we passed through we found wounded and many parties of men with bandaged arms and hands. On the 15th (September) we reached a village in which we thought we should get some rest, but we had hardly gone to the field kitchens for our food when shrapnel started bursting near our regiment, which was in close formation. We at once sought cover in some houses. At six o'clock our company was ordered to move up to a wood in order to protect our artillery, which was coming into action in a field, the rest of the battalion marching northwards. On the 16th we advanced, covered by our guns. The enemy was hidden in bushes, and some were firing from houses into our trenches, which were not more than a hundred yards from the village. To my right and left wounded comrades were complaining bitterly that the enemy, shooting from the houses, found too easy a mark in us. If we assumed an upright position we were immediately fired on. Two of our soldiers endeavoured to carry a wounded man to the rear; one was killed, and the other was wounded in the attempt. Soon the enemy's bullets began to get us from the right, and after about one hour, during which time the Company lost about 25 men, we were forced to retire. This brought our total strength down to 80 (we started 251 men). We had no officers left. . . . On the 18th, at 4.30 A.M., we reached a village where we thought we expected to be able to rest, and collected some straw. Before half an hour had passed, however, the shrapnel again found us out. We spent the afternoon in the village, which was continuously under shell fire in spite of the fact that our guns were shelling the enemy's artillery. We heard our Colonel say that our guns could not get at those of the enemy satisfactorily, as the latter were so well concealed. . . . Our condition is now really awful, for we have to lie out in all weathers; and we are all looking forward to a speedy end. We are very badly off as regards food. . . . Some of our regiments can only muster three to four companies.'

(The enemy referred to are the French.)

Another letter written during the retreat in front of the French from Montmirail contains the following :—

'After a thirty-six hours' march we had a rest, and arrived just in time for the fight. For three days we did not have a hot meal, because

our field kitchens were lost. We got a hot meal yesterday evening. Though we are all just ready to drop, we must march on.'

Yet two more extracts :—

'We found great quantities of food, but for fear of poison did not take possession of it until we had got hold of the proprietor of the house and forced him to taste it.'

'We are near Reims, after having gone through hard, bloody, and most horrible days. Thank God I am still alive. Of our regiment of 3000 men there are now only 1600. Let us hope that this battle —which ought to be one of the greatest in history—will leave me safe and well, and give us peace. I am absolutely done, but we must not despair.'

Wednesday, September 30, merely marked another day's progress in the gradual development of the situation, and was distinguished by no activity beyond slight attacks by the enemy. There was also artillery fire at intervals. One of our airmen succeeded in dropping nine bombs, some of which fell on the enemy's rolling-stock collected on the railway near Laon. Some of the enemy's front trenches were found empty at night ; but nothing much can be deduced from this fact, for they are frequently evacuated in this way, no doubt to prevent the men in the back line firing on their comrades in front of them.

Thursday, October 1, was a most perfect autumn day, and the most peaceful that there has been since the two forces engaged on the Aisne. There was only desultory gun fire as targets offered. During the night the enemy made a few new trenches. A French aviator dropped one bomb on a railway station and three bombs on troops massed near it.

The weather on Friday, the 2nd, was very misty in the early hours, and it continued hazy until the late afternoon, becoming thicker again at night. The Germans were driven out of a mill which they had occupied as an advanced post, their guns and machine-guns which supported it being knocked out one by one by well-directed artillery fire from a flank. During the night they made the usual two attacks on the customary spot in our lines, and as on previous occasions were repulsed. Two of their trenches were captured and filled in. Our loss was six wounded men.

Up to September 21 the air mileage made by our airmen

since the beginning of the war amounted to 87,000 miles, an average of 2000 miles per day, the total equalling nearly four times the circuit of the world. The total time spent in the air was 1400 hours.

There are many points connected with the fighting methods of either side that may be of interest. The following description was given by a battalion commander who has been at the front since the commencement of hostilities, and has fought both in the open and behind entrenchments. It must, however, be borne in mind that it only represents the experiences of a particular unit. It deals with the tactics of the enemy's infantry :—

'The important points to watch are the heads of valleys and ravines, woods—especially those on the sides of hollow ground—and all dead ground to the front and flanks. The German officers are skilled in leading troops forward under cover, in closed bodies, but once the latter are deployed and there is no longer direct personal leadership the men will not face heavy fire. Sometimes the advance is made in a series of lines, with the men well opened out at five or six paces interval ; at other times it is made in a line, with the men almost shoulder to shoulder, followed in all cases by supports in close formation. The latter either waver when the front line is checked, or crowd on to it, moving forward under the orders of their officers, and the mass forms a magnificent target. Prisoners have described the fire of our troops as pinning them to the ground, and this is certainly borne out by their action.

'When the Germans are not heavily entrenched no great losses are incurred in advancing against them by the methods in which the British Army has been instructed. For instance, in one attack over fairly open ground against about an equal force of infantry sheltered in a sunken road and in ditches we lost only ten killed and sixty wounded, while over four hundred of the enemy surrendered after about fifty had been killed. Each side had the support of a battery, but the fight for superiority from infantry fire took place at about seven hundred yards, and lasted only half an hour. When the Germans were wavering some of them put up the white flag, but others went on firing, and our men continued to do the same. Eventually a large number of white flags, improvised from handkerchiefs, pieces of shirt, white biscuit

bags, etc., were exhibited all along the line, and many men hoisted their helmets on their rifles.

'In the fighting behind entrenchments the Germans endeavour to gain ground by making advances in line at dusk or just before dawn, and then digging themselves in, in the hope no doubt that they may eventually get so near as to be able, as at manœuvres, to reach the hostile trenches in a single rush. They have never succeeded in doing this against us. If by creeping up in dead ground they do succeed in gaining ground by night, they are easily driven back by fire in the morning. A few of the braver men sometimes remain behind, at ranges of even three hundred or four hundred yards, and endeavour to inflict losses by sniping. Sharpshooters, also, are often noticed in trees or wriggling about until they get good cover. The remedy is to take the initiative and detail men to deal with the enemy's sharpshooters.

'A few night attacks have been made against us. Before one of them a party crept up close to the British line and set alight a hayrick, so that it should form a beacon on which the centre of the attacking line marched. Generally, however, in the night and early morning attacks, groups of forty or fifty men have come on, the groups sometimes widely separated one from another, and making every endeavour to obtain any advantage from cover. Light-balls and searchlights have on some occasions been used. Latterly the attacks have become more and more half-hearted. Against us the enemy has never closed with the bayonet. The German trenches I have seen were deep enough to shelter a man when firing standing, and had a step down in rear for the supports to sit in.

'As regards our own men, there was at first considerable reluctance to entrench, as has always been the case at the commencement of a war. Now, however, having bought experience dearly, their defences are such that they can defy the German artillery fire.'

October 3-8

The comparative calm on our front has continued. Though fine and considerably warmer, the last six days have been slightly misty, with clouds hanging low, so that the conditions have not been very favourable for aerial reconnaissance. In regard to the latter, it is astonishing how quickly the habit is

acquired—even by those who are not aviators—of thinking of the weather in terms of its suitability for flying. There has been a bright moon also, which has militated against night attacks.

On Saturday, the 3rd, practically nothing happened, except that each side shelled the other towards evening. On Sunday there was a similar absence of activity. Opposite one portion of the line the enemy's bands played patriotic airs, and the audiences which gathered gave a chance to our waiting howitzers. Not only do their regimental bands perform occasionally, but with their proverbial fondness for music the Germans have in some places got gramophones in their trenches.

On Monday, the 5th, there were three separate duels in the air between French and German aviators, one of which was visible from our trenches. Two of the struggles were, so far as could be seen, indecisive, but in the third the French airmen were victorious and brought down their opponents, both of whom were killed, by machine-gun fire. The observer was so burnt as to be unrecognisable. During the day some men of the Landwehr were taken prisoners by us. They were in very poor condition, and wept copiously when captured. One, on being asked what he was crying for, explained that, though they had been advised to surrender to the English, they believed that they would be shot. On that evening our airmen had an unusual amount of attention paid to them both by the German aviators and their artillery of every description. One of our infantry patrols discovered one hundred and fifty dead Germans in a wood one and a half miles to our front. We sent out a party to bury them, but it was fired upon and had to withdraw.

On Tuesday, the 6th, the enemy's guns were active in the afternoon. It is believed that the bombardment was due to anger because two of our howitzer shells had detonated right in one of the enemy's trenches which was full of men. Three horses were killed by the German fire. Wednesday, the 7th, was uneventful. On Thursday, the 8th, the shelling by the enemy of the locality of our front, which has so far been the scene of their greatest efforts, was again continuous.

Opposite one or two points the Germans have attempted to gain ground by sapping, in some places with a view secretly

to pushing forward machine-guns in advance of their trenches, so that they can suddenly sweep with cross fire the space between our line and theirs, and so take any advance of ours in flank. It is reported that at one point where the French were much annoyed by the fire of a German machine-gun which was otherwise inaccessible, they drove a mine gallery fifty metres long up to and under the emplacement, and blew up the gun. The men who drove the gallery belonged to a corps which is recruited in one of the coal-mining districts of France. The German machine-guns are mounted on low sledges and are inconspicuous and evidently easily moved.

The fighting now consists mostly of shelling by the artillery of both sides, and in the front line of fire from machine-guns, as an occasional target offers. Our Maxims have been doing excellent work and have proved most efficient weapons for the sort of fighting in which we are now engaged. At times there are so many outbursts of their fire in different directions that it is possible for an expert to tell by comparison which guns have their springs properly adjusted and are well 'tuned up' for the day.

The amount of practice that our officers are now getting in the use of this weapon is proving most valuable in teaching them how to maintain it at concert pitch, as an instrument, and how to derive the best tactical results from its employment. Against us the Germans are not now expending so much gun ammunition as they have been, but they continue to fire at insignificant targets. They have a habit of suddenly dropping heavy shells without warning in localities or villages far behind our front line, possibly on the chance of catching some of our troops in bivouac or billets. They also fire a few rounds at night.

Artillery has up to now played so great a part in the war that a few general remarks descriptive of the methods of its employment by the enemy are justified. Their field artillery armament consists of 15 pr. Q.F. guns for the horse and field batteries of divisions, and there are, in addition, with each corps three to six batteries of 4.3 in. field howitzers and about two batteries of 5.9 in. howitzers. With an army there are some 8.2 in. heavy howitzers.

The accuracy of their fire is apt at first to cause some alarm, more especially as the guns are usually well concealed

and the position and the direction from which the fire is proceeding difficult of detection. But, accurate as is their shooting, the German gunners have on the whole had little luck, and during the past three weeks an astonishingly small proportion of the number of shells fired by them have been really effective. Quite the most striking feature of their handling of artillery is the speed with which they concentrate fire upon any selected point. They dispense to a great extent with the method of ranging known by us as 'bracketing,' especially when acting on the defensive, and direct fire by means of squared maps and telephone. Thus, when a target is found, its position on the map is telephoned to such batteries as it is desired to employ against that particular square.

In addition to the guns employed to fire on targets as they are picked up, others are told off to watch particular roads and to deal with any of the enemy using them. Both for the location of targets and the communication of the effect of fire, reliance is placed on observation from aeroplanes and balloons, and on information supplied by special observers and secret agents who are sent out ahead or left behind in the enemy's lines to communicate by telephone or signal. These observers have been found in haystacks, barns, and other buildings well in advance of the German lines.

Balloons of the so-called 'Sausage' pattern remain up in the air for long periods for the purpose of discovering targets; and until our aviators made their influence felt by chasing all hostile aeroplanes on sight, the latter were continually hovering over our troops in order to 'register' their positions and to note where headquarters, reserves, gun teams, etc., were located. If a suitable target is discovered, the airman drops a smoke ball directly over it or lets fall some strips of tinsel which glitter in the sun as they slowly descend to earth.

The range to the target is apparently ascertained by those near the guns by means of a large telemeter, or other range-finder, which is kept trained on the aeroplane, so that when the signal is made the distance to the target vertically below is at once obtained. A few rounds are then fired and the result signalled back by the aviator according to some prearranged code.

October 9

In spite of the perfection of their arrangements for ranging and observation, there has been much waste of ammunition by the Germans.

For instance, within an area of two acres on our side of the Aisne there are over one hundred craters made by their heavy high-explosive shell. This shower of projectiles, which must have cost some £1000, did absolutely no damage, for the locality never happened to be occupied whilst it was being bombarded. It also incidentally illustrates one weak point of indirect fire when unaccompanied by observation. Another example of prodigality in ammunition is the continued shelling of Reims. This is still carried on at intervals, and on the 6th resulted in the deaths of an entire family of eight people. On the 7th twelve of the inhabitants were hit.

On the other hand, concealment of their own guns as of all their troops has been most carefully practised by the Germans; and they construct alternative emplacements so that when one position is made too hot another can be taken up without loss of time.

Ever since the South African war the desirability of rendering troops as invisible as possible has been generally recognised in all armies, and this war has thrown much light on the matter. It appears that at long ranges the uniform matters little; the blue coat and red trousers of the French infantry and cavalry not being any more conspicuous than the clothes of our own men or of the Germans. But at medium ranges the red trousers of our allies show up very clearly. When infantry are lying down, however, their *képis* are not so easily seen as our own flat-topped forage caps. From the interrogation of prisoners it has been ascertained that at medium ranges both French and British officers are very easily distinguishable from their men, and that selected marksmen provided with field-glasses are specially told off from each platoon of German infantry to pick off officers. The French officer is betrayed by the greater visible length of his red trousers and by his accoutrements, while the British officer is 'given away' by his sword, his open jacket with low collar and tie, his Sam Browne belt, and the absence of a pack. Even such trifling differences as the colour or cut of the breeches are said to be

noticeable. The Germans certainly do employ snipers, and some have been found on church towers, up trees, and in houses. One of them succeeded in killing two of our officers and wounding two more before he was accounted for.

Some of our prisoners report that their officers have been ordered to remove their distinguishing shoulder straps. But this may be in order not to convey information to the enemy as to the units to which they belong. At any rate, to judge from the officers already captured, the order has not been carried out generally.

The following notification to his troops by one of the French Army Commanders bears upon German methods of warfare :—'The Germans have forced some prisoners of war to remain in their trenches. When the French advanced, under the impression that the trenches were in possession of their own side, they were fired on at close range.'

That this has actually been done is fully confirmed, with illuminating details as to the German methods of war in the twentieth century, by an entry in a captured field note-book. It runs thus :—

'16*th September*.—At dawn the shelling began. We retired with the prisoners. My two prisoners work hard at digging trenches. At midday I got the order to rejoin at the village with them. I was very glad, as I had been ordered to shoot them as soon as the enemy advanced. Thank God it was not necessary.'

On the other hand, an example is given of an order which prescribes only legal and suitable precautions—except as regards the shooting of hostages—for self-protection in an enemy country. It was issued some time ago.

'AIX-LA-CHAPELLE, *August* 10, 1914.

'To protect ourselves from the extremely hostile attitude of the Belgian population it is necessary to take very vigorous and energetic measures against non-combatants who take part in the struggle. For this purpose no firearms or explosives must be retained by them.

'It is therefore ordered that before a locality is occupied a detachment of all arms will march in ahead of the columns and warn the population through the mayor and local clergy to deliver up all arms, ammunition, and explosives.

'After they have handed over their arms the inhabitants will be collected outside the locality, and the houses and gardens will be searched. If any arms are found, hostages will be executed and the place set on fire.

'When the inhabitants are summoned to surrender their arms, they will be informed of the penalties to which they expose themselves by non-compliance.

'The arms will be destroyed and the explosives thrown into water.

'(Signed) VON QUAST,
'*Commanding IX. A.C.*'

Another German order—of the 2nd Army—is quoted because it is possibly significant of the present state of Germany's military resources :—

'The Minister of War wishes to impress upon all the necessity for searching the field of battle with the greatest care for all warlike material belonging to our own Army, such as—Field-glasses, water-bottles, haversacks, rifles, cartridges, also limbers and supply wagons, which can be used again for new formations. In addition to this, units must take care to pick up unexpended ammunition and empty cartridge cases.'

The lull in the operations on our immediate front pending a general advance affords an opportunity (to-day, October 9, 1914) for giving some further description of the country in which we are operating, and of the valley of the Aisne in particular.

The different rivers which cut across the line of advance in the direction of Laon have already been enumerated. Any northward move from the Marne traverses the Department of the Aisne, which is one of several departments included in the district of Champagne. To our right rear lies the southern half of the district called La Champagne Pouilleuse, which owing to the nature of its soil is the most famous wine district of France, indeed of the world, where the lower slopes of the undulating country are covered with vineyards for miles. We are, however, more concerned with the area immediately ahead of us, which is the higher portion of two plateaux which are connected by the line of slopes known as La Falaise de la Champagne, forming the original French defensive position running from La Fère through Laon to Reims. This area

consists of a fairly open plateau, intersected by the depressions down which run the watercourses of the westward flowing rivers. Between the Marne and Laon, though there are a few vineyards, the country is not wine-growing to the same degree as is that south of Reims and round Epernay. On the slopes of the Aisne valley itself, the vineyards are few and far between, and only to be found in favoured spots.

The Aisne flows right across our front, following a tortuous course along the bottom of the valley some hundred metres below the edge of the plateau on either bank. It is a placid stream between 150 and 200 feet in width, and unfordable. The bottom of the valley down which it meanders consists of practically flat meadowland intersected by the various roads leading north and south over the bridges which span the river. These roads are for the most part lined with poplars or fruit trees, whose military significance lies in the fact that they screen the movement of troops along the roads, though, on the other hand, they make the position of the latter conspicuous from afar.

There are several villages either actually on the banks of the river or nestling on the slopes of the valley. The chief place along the British front is Soissons, a town lying on the left bank at a pronounced bend northwards. The villages on the river itself are of considerable tactical importance, since most of the bridges are close to them. They have therefore been the targets of the German artillery, and some are now no more than masses of ruins. Several of the hamlets at some distance from the Aisne and on its left bank have formed the objects of similar attentions from the enemy's guns—probably because they might serve as points of concentration for our troops—as have also the greater number of the roads winding down the hillsides facing north and leading across the meadows, which afford the only channels of approach to our troops on the north side. In regard to the villages, one point which strikes a fresh eye is their compactness, for in most of them the houses are clustered together in one mass, outlying houses being rare. When on a hillside, they line the road, sometimes almost entirely on one side. There are also, of course, outlying châteaux and farms which are quite isolated.

The other main topographical features of the valley are two railways and a canal. At the village of Vailly, the light

railway which to the east of that place skirts the foothills on the south side crosses over to the right bank and continues westward to Soissons. The double line joining Compiègne on the west with Reims on the east follows the lower hills on the south side from Soissons to Sermoise, and, at the latter point, turns south-east up the Vesle valley. From Condé, where it joins the Aisne, a canal runs parallel to the river on its left bank to Bourg, where it is joined from the north-east by a branch canal carried across the river on an aqueduct.

Generally speaking, the slopes forming the north side of the valley are steeper than those of the south, but in other respects the two sides are very similar. Both are equally cut up into spurs and subsidiary valleys, the chief of the latter on the south being formed by the watercourse of the Vesle, which extends south-eastwards through Braisne. Both on the north and south the slopes leading down to the Aisne are thickly wooded in patches, the woods in some places stretching away back over the edge of the plateau for some distance. On account of the existence of these woods on the edges of the slopes on our bank of the river, it is at many points only possible to obtain glimpses of short stretches of the opposite slopes, while the woods on that side screen large portions of the top of the plateau on the north.

Owing to the concealment afforded to the Germans' fire trenches and gun emplacements by the woods, and to the fact that nearly all the bridges and roads leading to them as well as a great part of the southern slopes are open to their fire, the position held by them is a very strong one. Except for these patches of wood, the terrain generally is not enclosed. No boundaries between the fields exist as in England. There are ditches here and there, but no hedges, wire fences, or walls, except round the enclosures in the villages. A large proportion of the woods, however, are enclosed by high rabbit-netting, which is in some places supported by iron stanchions. The top of the plateau on the south of the river to some extent resembles Salisbury Plain, except that the latter is downland, while the former is cultivated, being sown with lucerne, wheat, and beetroot. The Aisne valley is broader and deeper than any of those to be found on Salisbury Plain, and much more heavily wooded.

A feature of this part of the country, and one which is not

confined to the neighbourhood of the Aisne, is the large number of caves, both natural and artificial, and of quarries. These are of great service to the forces on both sides, since they can often be used as sheltered accommodation for the troops in the second line. Other points worthy of note are the excellence of the metalled roads, though the metalled portion is very narrow, and the comparative ease with which one can find one's way about, even without a map. This is due partly to the prevailing straightness of the roads, and partly to the absence of hedges. There are signposts at all cross-roads, whilst the name of each village is posted in a conspicuous place at the entry and exit of the main highway passing through it. In addition to the absence of hedges, the tall white ferro-concrete telegraph-posts lining many of the main roads give a somewhat strange note to the landscape.

October 9-12

From Friday, October 9, until Monday, the 12th, so little has occurred that the narrative of events can be given in a few words. There has been the usual sporadic shelling of our trenches, which has resulted in but little harm, so well dug in are our men ; and on the night of the 10th the Germans made yet a fresh assault, supported by artillery fire, against the point which has all along attracted most of their attention. The attempt was again a costly failure, towards which our guns were able to contribute with great effect.

Details have now been received of an exciting encounter in mid-air. One of our aviators, on a fast scouting monoplane, sighted a hostile machine. He had two rifles fixed, one on either side of his engine, and at once gave chase, but lost sight of his opponent amongst some clouds. Soon, however, another machine hove into view, which turned out to be a German Otto biplane, a type of machine which is not nearly so fast as our scouts. Our officer once again started in pursuit. He knew that, owing to the position of the propeller on the hostile machine, he could not be fired at when astern of his opponent. At sixty yards' range he fired one rifle without apparent result ; then, as his pace was carrying him ahead of his quarry, he turned round and, again coming to about the same distance behind, emptied his magazine at the German.

The latter began at once to descend as if either he or his machine were hit.

Shutting off his engine and volplaning to free his hands, the pursuer re-charged his magazine. Unfortunately it jammed, but he managed to insert four cartridges and to fire them at his descending opponent, who disappeared into a bank of cloud with dramatic suddenness. When the British officer emerged below the clouds he could see no sign of the other. He therefore climbed up to an altitude of some 7000 feet, and came to the conclusion that the German must have come to earth in the French lines.

French airmen, too, have been very successful during the last three days, having dropped several bombs amongst some German cavalry and caused considerable loss and disorder, and having by similar means silenced a battery of field howitzers.

The German anti-aircraft guns have recently been unusually active. From their rate of fire they seem to be nearly automatic, but so far they have not had much effect in reducing the air reconnaissances carried out by us.

The general account of the position of the Aisne already given is incomplete without some description of the line actually held by our troops, though it must be at once obvious that the information on that subject which it is possible to publish is strictly limited. It is treading on less dangerous ground to depict the life led by our soldiers in the trenches. A striking feature of our line—to use the conventional term which so seldom expresses accurately the position taken up by an army—is that it consists really of a series of trenches not all placed alongside each other, but some more advanced than others and many facing in different directions. At one place they run east and west, along one side of a valley; at another almost north and south, up some subsidiary valley; here they line the edge of a wood and there they are on the reverse slope of a hill or possibly along a sunken road. And at different points both the German and British trenches jut out like promontories into what might be regarded as the opponent's territory.

Though both sides have moved forward at certain points and withdrawn at others, no very important change has been effected in their dispositions, in spite of the enemy's repeated

counter-attacks. These have been directed principally against one portion of the position won by us. But, in spite of lavish expenditure of life, they have not so far succeeded in driving us back.

The situation of the works in the German front line as a whole has been a matter of deliberate selection, for they have had the advantage of previous reconnaissance, being first in the field. Behind the front they now have several lines prepared for a step-by-step defence.

Another point which might cause astonishment to the visitor to our entrenchments is the evident indifference displayed to the provision of an extended field of frontal rifle fire—which is generally accepted as being one of the great requirements of a defensive position. It is still desirable if it can be obtained without the usually accompanying drawback of exposure to the direct fire of the hostile artillery. But experience has shown that a short field of fire is sufficient to beat back the infantry assaults of the enemy; and by giving up direct fire at long or medium ranges and placing our trenches on the reverse slope of a hill or behind the crest, it is in many places possible to gain shelter from the frontal fire of the German guns. For men well trained in musketry and under good fire-control, dead ground beyond short range from their position has comparatively small terrors.

Many of the front trenches of the Germans equally lack a distant field of fire, but if lost they would be rendered untenable by us by the fact that they are exposed to fire from the German guns in rear and to a cross rifle fire from neighbouring works. The extent to which cross fire of all kinds is employed is also remarkable. Many localities and areas along the Aisne are not swept from the works directly in front of them, but are rendered untenable by rifle fire from neighbouring features or that of guns out of sight. So much is this the case, that amongst these hills and valleys it is a difficult matter for troops to find out whence they are being shot at. There is a perpetual triangular duel. A's infantry can see nothing to shoot at, but are under fire from B's guns. The action of B's guns then brings upon them the attention of some of A's artillery waiting for a target, the latter being in their turn assailed by other batteries; and so it goes on. In wooded country, in spite of aeroplanes and balloons, smoke-

less powder has made the localisation and identification of targets a matter of supreme difficulty.

Our men have made themselves fairly comfortable in the trenches, in the numerous quarries cut out of the hillsides, and in the picturesque villages whose steep streets and red-tiled roofs climb the slopes and peep out amid the green and russet of the woods. In the firing line the men sleep and obtain shelter in the dug-outs they have hollowed or 'undercut' in the sides of the trenches. These refuges are slightly raised above the bottom of the trench so as to remain dry in wet weather. The floor of the trench is also sloped for purposes of drainage. Some trenches are provided with head-cover, and others with overhead cover, the latter, of course, giving protection from the weather as well as from shrapnel balls and splinters of shell.

Considerable ingenuity has been exercised in naming the shelters. Amongst other favourites are 'The Hotel Cecil,' 'The Ritz,' 'Hotel Billet-doux,' 'Hotel Rue Dormir,' etc. On the road barricades, also, are to be found boards bearing the notice—'This Way to the Prussians.' Obstacles of every kind abound, and at night each side can hear the enemy driving in pickets for entanglements, digging *trous-de-loup*, or working forward by sapping. In some places the obstacles constructed by both sides are so close together that some wag has suggested that each should provide working parties to perform this fatiguing duty alternately, since their work is now almost indistinguishable and serves the same purpose.

The quarries and caves to which allusion has already been made provide ample accommodation for whole battalions, and most comfortable are the shelters which have been constructed in them. The northern slopes of the Aisne valley are fortunately very steep, and this to a great extent protects us from the enemy's shells, many of which pass harmlessly over our heads, to burst in the meadows below along the river bank. At all points subject to shell fire access to the firing line from behind is provided by communication trenches. These are now so good that it is possible to cross in safety the fire-swept zone to the advanced trenches from the billets in villages, the bivouacs in quarries, or the other places where the headquarters of units happen to be.

To those at home the life led by our men and by the in-

habitants in this zone would seem strange indeed. All day, and often at night as well, the boom of the guns and the scream of the shells overhead continue. At times, especially in the middle of the day and after dark, the bombardment slackens ; at others it swells into an incessant roar in which the reports of the different types of gun are merged into one great volume of sound. Now, there are short, fierce bursts, as a dozen heavy howitzer shells fall into a ploughed field, sending up clouds of black smoke and great clods of earth, or the white smoke-puffs of shrapnel suddenly open out and hang in clusters over a bridge, trench, or road. Then, perhaps, there is a period of quiescence, soon to be broken by a smaller howitzer shell which comes into a village and throws up a shower of dust, tiles, and stones.

And through this pandemonium the inhabitants go about their business as if they had lived within the sound of guns all their lives. A shell bursts in one street. In the next not a soul pays any attention or thinks of turning the corner to see what damage has been done. Those going to the trenches are warned to hurry across some point which the enemy have been shelling, and which has already proved a death-trap for others. After running across it some mortification may be felt at the sight of an old woman pulling turnips in the very line of fire. Along certain stretches of road which are obviously 'unhealthy,' the children continue to play in the gutter, or the old folks pass slowly trundling wheelbarrows. It may be fatalism, for not all these people can be deaf, nor can all be so stupid as not to realise how close they are to death.

It has already been mentioned that, according to information obtained from the enemy, fifteen Germans were killed by a bomb dropped upon an ammunition wagon of a cavalry column. It was thought at the time that this might have been the work of one of our airmen, who reported that he had dropped a hand-grenade on a convoy, and had then got a bird's-eye view of the finest firework display that he had ever seen.

From the corroborative evidence of locality it now appears that this was the case, and that the grenade thrown by him must probably have been the cause of the destruction of a small convoy carrying field-gun and howitzer ammunition,

which has now been found, a total wreck, on a road passing through the Forêt de Retz, north-east of Villers-Cotterets. Along the road lie fourteen motor lorries, which are no more than skeletons of twisted iron, bolts, and odd fragments. Everything inflammable on the wagons has been burnt, as have the stripped trees—some with trunks split—on either side of the road. Of the drivers nothing now remains except some tattered boots and charred scraps of clothing, while the ground within a radius of fifty yards of the wagons is littered with pieces of iron, the split brass cases of cartridges which have exploded, and some fixed gun ammunition with live shell which has not done so.

It is possible to reconstruct the incident, if it was, in fact, brought about as supposed.

The grenade must have detonated on the leading lorry on one side of the road and caused the cartridges carried by it to explode. The three vehicles immediately in rear must then have been set on fire, with a similar result. Behind these are groups of four and two vehicles, so jammed together as to suggest that they must have collided in a desperate attempt to stop. On the other side of the road, almost level with the leading wagon, are four more, which were probably fired by the explosion of the first. If this appalling destruction was due to one hand-grenade, and there is a considerable amount of presumptive evidence to show that this was the case, it is an illustration of the potentialities of a small amount of high explosive detonated in the right spot, whilst the nature of the place where it occurred—a narrow forest road between high trees—is a testimony to the skill of the airman.

It is only fair to add that some of the French newspapers claim that this damage to the enemy was caused by the action of some of their Dragoons.

October 13-16

The time has come when some light can be thrown on a change in the strategic part in the operations which is being played by the British forces, this change being in the direction of the application of pressure.

Since the fighting on the Marne, the gradual and progressive extension northwards on the Allies' line has been one

of the features of the campaign in France, and it has up till recently been carried out by the French alone. But now, thanks to the arrival of reinforcements, we have been enabled to take a hand in this prolongation, and to utilise a portion of our forces in acting much farther to the north than heretofore.

During the past few days British troops have been engaged along the Franco-Belgian border, as well as along the Aisne, and in the former sphere the Allied forces extend southwards from Nieuport on the coast. In both theatres the results attained, without being in any way decisive, have been entirely satisfactory and in furtherance of the general scheme which the Allied Armies are carrying out in co-operation. In the southern of the two spheres in which we have been engaged—on the Aisne—our right wing has been maintaining its pressure without actually moving forward, whilst in the northern sphere our left wing has advanced a considerable distance in the face of some opposition.

The narrative of tactical events will be continued up to the 16th. On the Aisne, since the repulse inflicted on the enemy on the night of the 10th-11th, which has already been recorded, there has been no serious fighting, and less artillery action than usual, for misty and occasionally rainy weather has rendered observation almost impossible and militated against the employment of guns. On the night of the 13th-14th the enemy began an attack which was not pushed through and may be regarded as a demonstration. Our patrols have been active with the bayonet at night and have accounted for numerous small parties of German infantry left to occupy their front trenches. But the positions of the opposing forces have remained practically unchanged.

In the north of France the fighting has so far been of a preparatory nature alone. As stated, ground has been gained by us, but misty weather has hampered aerial reconnaissance and has at times rendered artillery co-operation almost impossible. These factors, taken together with the nature of the *terrain*, have rendered progress somewhat slow. Before the actual course of events in this quarter is recounted it will assist to an understanding of what our troops are doing if the country in which they are operating is described.

The region bordering on the seaward portion of the western

frontier of Belgium is quite unlike the region of plateaux and broad river valleys east of Paris. It is mainly an industrial region, and, with its combination of mining and agriculture, might be compared to our Black Country, with Fen lands interspersed between the coal-mines and factories. In some directions the villages are so close together that this district has been described as one immense town, of which the various parts are in some places separated by cultivation and in others by groups of factories bristling with chimneys. The cultivated portions are very much enclosed, and are cut up by high, unkempt hedges and by ditches. The homelike note given to the landscape by the hedges is accentuated in places by the hopfields in which the poles have been left standing.

Next to the coast is the Wattergands, a reclaimed marshy tract drained by innumerable canals and dykes. The whole district is gently undulating or quite flat, except for a hill about 500 feet high, called Mont des Cats, situated some eight miles north-east of Hazebrouck, from which radiate spurs like fingers from the palm of the hand, and is the eminence upon which stands the town of Cassel. From anywhere save these two elevated points view is much restricted by the hedges and frequent belts of trees. The communications are bad. The main roads, though straight, have a narrow strip of inferior *pavé* in the centre, while the by-roads are very winding.

It is in blind country of this nature that our advanced guards near the Belgian frontier are engaging the advanced troops of the enemy. The latter consist in some places of cavalry supported by Jäger and Schützen detachments with large numbers of machine-guns, and in others of larger bodies of infantry. As was the case in our advance up to the Aisne, the enemy are making every effort to delay our progress, no doubt to give time for the stronger forces behind to perfect their arrangements. In general they take every advantage that is to be obtained from the ground and conceal themselves well, making use of ditches, hedges, and villages. They hold the buildings, many of which are placed in a state of defence, and in addition occupy narrow trenches with inconspicuous parapets outside the villages. The machine-guns are often placed in the centre of rooms, whence they can command an approach through a window.

So far in our advance we have inflicted considerable loss

on these detachments, in spite of the fact that they retreat under cover of darkness whenever possible. But their resistance is by no means passive, and they have made several determined counter-attacks in order to free themselves and throw us back. Many of the prisoners taken show the greatest surprise at being opposed by the British in this quarter.

To the north of the Lys, although for the reasons already given adequate reconnaissance ahead has been practically impossible, and in spite of the fact that the Germans held a strong position on the high ridge between Godewaersvelde and Bailleul, one of our cavalry forces would not be denied, and, supported by infantry, has driven the enemy back steadily. Some hard fighting has taken place in this direction, especially in the neighbourhood of Mont des Cats, where Prince Max of Hesse was mortally wounded on the 12th. He is buried in the grounds of the monastery which crowns the hill, together with three British officers and some German soldiers.

On the 13th a brilliant little exploit was performed by one of our cavalry patrols. Coming suddenly upon a German machine-gun detachment, the subaltern in command at once gave the order to charge, with the result that some of the Germans were killed, the rest scattered, and the gun captured and carried off.

On the right, to the south of the Lys, progress has been slower, partly because the *terrain* affords greater facilities to the force acting on the defensive, partly because the enemy has had more time for preparation and is in greater strength. The numerous dykes in this low-lying part are so broad and deep as to necessitate the transport of planks and ladders by which to cross them. It is in this quarter that the most obstinate combats for the possession of villages have so far taken place, and that the enclosed country has rendered the co-operation of the artillery most difficult, except where the villages attacked contain a church or other landmark standing above the trees, by which the guns can get their range. Though the employment of our field artillery in battering down defended villages is thus hampered, another and very efficacious method of arriving at the same result has been evolved and is proving most effective.

Parts of the region where fighting has been in progress

now present a melancholy aspect. Many of the once prosperous homesteads and hamlets are literally torn to pieces, the walls still standing pitted by shrapnel balls, and in some of the villages the churches are smouldering ruins. Dead horses, cows, and pigs which have been caught in the hail of shrapnel litter the village streets, and among the carcasses and débris wander the wretched inhabitants, who have returned to see what they can save from the wreckage. Here, blocking up a narrow side street, is a dead horse still harnessed to a trap, and beside it is stretched the corpse of a Jäger ; close by, in an enclosure where a shell has found them, lie some thirty cavalry horses ; a little farther on is laid out a row of German dead, for whom graves are being dug by the peasants.

The work of burial falls to a great extent on the inhabitants, who, with our soldiers, take no little care in marking the last resting-places of their countrymen and their Allies, either by little wooden crosses or else by flowers. Amidst the graves scattered all over the country-side are the rifle pits, trenches, and gun emplacements, which those now resting below the sod helped to defend or to attack. From these the progress of the fighting can be traced, and even its nature, for they vary from carefully constructed and cunningly placed works to the hastily shaped lair of a German sniper, or the roadside ditch, with its sides scooped out by the entrenching implements of our infantry.

October 12-14

Notwithstanding the trying nature of the fighting in this quarter, and the wet weather, the troops are very fit, and the fact that we are steadily advancing and that the enemy is giving way before us has proved a most welcome and inspiring change for those who have been experiencing some weeks of monotony in trenches, where they had to endure continuous losses without the satisfaction of knowing for certain what losses were being inflicted upon the enemy except when he attacked. This is not the only advantage we possess over the Germans, for we still hear from prisoners that their advanced troops, at any rate, are short of food and exhausted by continual outpost work. We can afford to give our troops more rest, and there is no lack of good food.

Many of the troops opposed to us at present have only

two months' service, and some of our prisoners state that these men will not expose themselves in the trenches. Nevertheless, the enemy in front are fighting well and skilfully, and are showing considerable powers of endurance. They generally contrive to remove the wounded and often to bury their killed before they retire, their escape being facilitated by the numerous deep ditches.

Many of their cavalry patrols are wearing Belgian uniforms, a practice which is not excusable on the grounds of any lack of their own.

The inhabitants of one small town which has now been occupied by us state that a large force of German cavalry was recently billeted in the place, but that it retired hurriedly on the night of the 13th-14th, having some six hundred wounded, of which sixty-eight serious cases were left behind. The truth of the last part of the statement has been confirmed, for our troops found that number of men in a building over which an immense Red Cross flag was flying. As the British approached the town, smoke signals were being made from a tall chimney close to the building flying the flag. The Germans, consisting largely of Bavarian cavalry, who occupied this town for eight days, did not burn down the place, but they otherwise behaved in a way which merits the worst that has ever been said of them.

In spite of the adverse weather the aviators of both sides have not been idle in the northern theatre of operations. To begin with, on Monday, the 12th, a German airman flew over St. Omer and dropped five bombs on to it, apparently under the impression that the place was occupied by us. As a result two women and a little girl were killed. On Wednesday a hostile aeroplane was brought down by rifle and machine-gun fire, and both observer and pilot were captured. The pilot was decorated with the Iron Cross, which, according to his own account, had been awarded to him as being the first German to drop a bomb on to Antwerp. On the 15th three of our aeroplanes gave chase to a German machine. Unluckily, the one machine of ours which was faster than the enemy's met with some slight accident, and had to give up the chase.

A German airman recently made an unsuccessful attempt by means of four incendiary bombs to explode a French

captive observation-balloon. The missiles fell simultaneously on the circumference of a circle of about fifty yards diameter, and as they struck the ground emitted vivid red flames, followed by columns of dark smoke about sixty feet high. At the point where each fell was found a large mass resembling dark pumice-stone, and the stubble was burnt in patches of about a yard in diameter.

An incident which occurred during the 13th shows the resource and bravery of some of our enemy's scouts. The German artillery was retiring, and from time to time coming into action. An officer of one of our flank cavalry patrols had been standing for some minutes under a tree, when he noticed a fine wire hanging down close to the trunk.

Following the wire upwards with his eye, he was astonished to see one of the enemy in the tree. As he drew his revolver and fired the German dropped on to his head, also firing. The British officer was stunned, and when he came to it was to find himself alone, the peak of his cap blown away, and his uniform covered with blood, which was not his own.

As the campaign goes on the tendency of the Germans to rely on the splendid war material with which they have been so amply provided, rather than on the employment of masses of men, has become more and more marked. There are now indications, however, that their supply of material is not inexhaustible. The significant circular of the Prussian Minister of War enjoining the careful search of battlefields for equipment, and even the collection of empty cartridge cases, has been quoted in a previous letter. This circular seems to have been prompted more by necessity than by habits of economy, for in the recent fighting both gun and rifle ammunition of old patterns have been found in the trenches evacuated by the enemy, on the dead, and on prisoners.

Amongst the latter are Mauser cartridges similar to those used by the Boers in the South African War.

The following is a translation of a leaflet that German aviators have been dropping over the French lines :—

FRENCH SOLDIERS!

The Germans are only making war against the French Government, which is sacrificing you and your country to the egotism of the English.

Your commerce, your industry, and your agriculture will be ruined by this war, whilst the English alone will derive enormous profit from it.

You are pulling the chestnuts out of the fire for the English.

The news spread by your Government that the Russians are near Berlin is false. On the contrary, the Russians have been beaten in two great battles. One hundred and fifty thousand Russians have been captured, and the rest have been driven in rout from German territory.

FRENCH SOLDIERS, SURRENDER!

So that this war which is ruining your country may be ended as soon as possible.

Rest assured that the prisoners and wounded are well treated by us.

In order to let you know the truth, the following testimonial from Surgeon-Major Dr. Sauve, of the French Army (Rue Luxembourg, Paris) is given :—

I, the undersigned, declare that I have seen that in the German hospitals at Somme-Py and Aure the French wounded receive exactly the same treatment as the German. I may add that not only the French wounded but also their prisoners whom I saw were very well looked after.

The terms of this summons to surrender cannot be said to be tactful; and it has not had the desired effect. Apart from endeavours to influence the enemy, for others have probably been made, news of a sort is disseminated amongst the German soldiers by means of a special military newspaper called *The Patrol,* which is published in Berlin. Its historical value may be gauged by the statement made in its issue for September 6 :—

It may be confidently asserted that the resistance of the active army of the French has been overcome. Reserve troops and new formations will no doubt give our heroic forces plenty to do as they advance further.

After some three weeks' further fighting, however, facts must have convinced the German troops that this assertion was not justified. In a captured letter, dated September 27, for instance, the following passage occurs :—

We are very anxious about the result of the fighting. We have nothing but reports of great successes, but don't now put much faith in them. To-day we got some papers of the 1st to 5th September, and it is really painful to read the boastful announcements of the march on

Paris, for we are no nearer to Paris now than we were then. I don't know whether you realise this, but there is no use in trying to hide it.

Information recently received corroborates the impression already gained that the enemy's troops suffered severe privations during August and September. From the many letters which bear this out some extracts are given :—

September 22. . . . My best pals are killed or wounded. One company has dwindled to two-thirds of its original strength. We want peace quickly. We have been driven to exhaustion, and have marched for entire weeks, even through the nights. We have not had bread every day, have not washed for a fortnight, nor shaved since the commencement of the war. But all this is nothing, and we shall soon be home, for it will all soon be over. We have just been under the enemy's artillery fire for eight days.

We get no letters. We have passed thousands of full mail-bags on the road, but there are no officers to deal out the letters.

After a thirty-six hours' march without halting we arrived just in time for the fight. For three days we did not have a hot meal because our field kitchens went astray. We had a hot meal yesterday evening. We are all ready to drop, but must march on.

There is no doubt that the Germans have to a great extent recovered from the conditions implied by the above letters. But their forces are by no means what they were.

October 12-20

Before bringing the narrative of events in the northern area up to date, it will be as well to recapitulate on broad lines, with the addition of certain new matter now available, the general course of operations up to the night of October 16.

When the arrival of reinforcements enabled British troops to assist in the extension northwards of the Allies' line, the enemy in this area had advanced from the north-east and east and was holding a front extending from the high ground about Mont des Cats through Meteren to Estaires, on the river Lys, with advanced bodies of cavalry and other troops thrown out some distance in front. South of the Lys his line was continued due south from Estaires through very intricate country for about three miles, when it turned slightly to

the south-east, passing about three miles east of Béthune to Vermelles.

The Allies encountered some resistance on the 12th from the enemy's advanced troops, and on the 13th there was fighting all along the line between our advanced guards and those of the Germans, who at some points made determined counter-attacks. As a result, however, of two minor engagements at Mont des Cats and Meteren on the 13th, the enemy's right fell back in considerable haste, making use of the darkness to evade pursuit. Bailleul, which had been occupied for eight days, was abandoned without a shot being fired.

On the 14th the advance was continued by our left wing, the enemy being driven back so far that the rest of his line became endangered—as we have since learnt from the captured operation orders of the 6th Bavarian Cavalry Division. These state that, the right of the line having been forced to withdraw, the left was compelled to conform to the movement. The latter withdrawal left us by the night of the 15th in possession of all the country on the left bank of the Lys to a point some five miles below Armentières, and of all the bridges above Armentières. On the 16th the enemy retired from that town after a few shells had been fired at the barricade on the Nieppe bridge, and the river line to within a short distance of Frelinghien fell into our hands. At Armentières the enemy left behind fifty wounded, some rifles and ammunition, and a motor-car.

The state in which the crossings of the Lys were found indicates that no organised scheme of defence of the river line had been executed, even if it had been intended. Thus, to take six adjacent points, at Warneton the bridge had been destroyed and was being repaired by the Germans. That at Frelinghien had not been demolished and was strongly defended. At Houplines the bridge was destroyed; but at Nieppe the important road bridge connecting with Armentières and the railway bridge next to it were merely barricaded and not even prepared for demolition ; while, strange to say, the bridge at Erquinghem was neither defended nor broken.

The river Lys, which plays a prominent part in the operations, here flows through a depression so broad and shallow as to be practically a plain. It is from 45 feet to

75 feet wide, but only 6 feet deep. The navigation of its natural course is much obstructed by sandbanks, and it has been canalised in some parts, its value as a military obstacle being thereby much increased. To permit the passage of barges, many of the bridges are of the draw or swing type and can be easily demolished, but the gaps are not large and can be bridged easily.

To return to the narrative. Our right wing, south of the Lys, was, for the reasons already given, able to make little progress until the 15th. The resistance offered to its advance was of a most determined character, and the fighting resolved itself into a series of fiercely contested encounters. In the attack on some villages all the efforts of the infantry were unavailing until our howitzers had reduced the houses to ruins; other villages would be taken and retaken three times before they were finally secured. On this front the French cavalry gave our infantry most welcome support, and by the night of the 16th resistance had been overcome, and the enemy had fallen back some five miles to the eastward.

An incident of the fighting on this night is worth recording. An important crossing over the Lys at Warneton was strongly held by the Germans, who at the entrance to the town had constructed a high barricade loopholed at the bottom so that men could fire through it from a lying position. This formidable obstacle was encountered by a squadron of our cavalry. Nothing daunted, they obtained help from the artillery, who man-handled a gun into position, and blew the barricade to pieces, scattering the defenders.

They then advanced some three-quarters of a mile into the centre of the town, where they found themselves in a large *place*. They had hardly reached the farther end when one of the buildings suddenly appeared to leap skywards in a sheet of flame, a shower of star shells at the same time making the place as light as day, and enabling the enemy—who were ensconced in the surrounding houses—to pour in a devastating fire from rifles and machine-guns. Our cavalry managed to extricate themselves from this trap with a loss of only one officer—the squadron leader—wounded and nine men killed and wounded; but, determining that none of their number should fall into the enemy's hands, a party of volunteers went back. and, taking off their boots in order to make

no noise on the pavement, re-entered the inferno they had just left, and succeeded in carrying off their wounded comrades.

During Saturday the 17th, Sunday the 18th, and Monday the 19th, our right encountered strong opposition about La Bassée from the enemy, who was established behind embankments and spoil-heaps, and well provided with machine-guns. Advance was slow on account of the difficulty of reconnaissance. In the centre and on the left better progress was made, although the Germans were everywhere entrenched and still continued to hold some of the villages on the Lys in spite of bombardment. At the close of each of these days a night counter-stroke was delivered against one or other part of our line, but all were repulsed without difficulty.

On Tuesday, the 20th, a determined but unsuccessful attack was made against practically the whole of our line. At one point, where one of our brigades made a counter-attack, 1100 German dead were found in a trench and 40 prisoners were taken. Among the prisoners captured this day by the Belgians was a hunchback, who expressed his gratitude and relief at being a prisoner. He had had no training before August 19th last, and said that many men of his regiment were between seventeen and eighteen years of age.

The following letter found on a German gives an interesting appreciation of the present situation from the enemy's point of view :—

PERENCHIES, NEAR LILLE, *October* 16, 1914.

DEAR BROTHER,—Taking the opportunity of a five hours' pause, which is the first chance of writing I have had, I hasten to inform you of my present position. On the 5th October came the order that the 19th Corps should leave the 3rd Army and form part of the 1st Army under General Kluck. The march from St. Hillegras to Lille, 180 kilometres (108 miles) in five days was very exhausting. In Lille hostile infantry was reported, and we were engaged in street and house fighting on the 13th and 14th, and it was only by the 19th Heavy Artillery that the town was compelled to surrender. Lille has already been taken by us three times, and if troops or supply columns are attacked again the place will be razed to the ground. The shell fire, although it only lasted an hour, has cost the town at least a hundred buildings. Here, also, in Lille the 77th Field Artillery has many of our comrades on its conscience.

Of prisoners we have absolutely none at present, since the wretches

put on civilian clothes, and then one can look in vain for soldiers. We lie five miles from Lille, and are to hold up the English who have landed. This will be no light task, since we are not fully informed as to their strength. It gives one the impression that the war will last a long time. Well, I shall hold out even if it goes on for another year. In front of us we can hear heavy guns, so we may easily have more fighting to-day. We have had no post for fourteen days, for the country here is very unsafe.

Although the enemy as a rule contrives to remove his wounded, there have been signs in many of the villages of a hurried retirement. In one a great quantity of lances and ammunition was abandoned, in another so hasty was the retreat that the staff left behind their dinner, operation orders, and a number of photographs of the campaign, which they were evidently examining when they were alarmed.

The advance has been much hindered not only by the weather and by the nature of the country, but by the impossibility of forecasting the reception that our advanced troops are likely to meet with on approaching a village or town. One place may be hastily evacuated as untenable, while another in the same general line may continue to resist all efforts for a considerable time. The feelings of our cyclists may be imagined when on cautiously approaching a town, suspecting an ambush at every turn, they are met by a throng of citizens of both sexes who kiss them effusively. Unfortunately this experience is rather the exception than the rule. At the next village the roads will in all probability have trenches cut in them and be blocked by barricades defended by machine-guns. Another, perhaps, can only be taken after an action of all arms.

Under such circumstances an incautious advance is severely punished, and it is impossible for large bodies of troops to push on until the front has been thoroughly reconnoitred. This work requires the highest qualities from the cavalry, cyclists, and advanced guards, for it cannot be carried out merely by obtaining a view of the enemy, which is often impossible, but must be effected by drawing his fire and compelling him to disclose his dispositions.

Among other incidents of the fighting which serve to illustrate the resource and initiative of our rank and file may be mentioned the following :—

On the 15th an infantry patrol which was digging an advanced trench at night, hearing some of the enemy's cavalry approaching, lay in wait for them, killing four and capturing five without suffering any casualties themselves. On the 16th the crew of one of our armoured motor-cars obtained information that a party of hostile cavalry was in a farm. They enlisted help from ten men of the nearest battalion, who stationed themselves on one side of the farm while the motor-car waited on the other. Being unable to bolt their quarry, our men carried fire to the farm, which had the desired effect and resulted in two Uhlans being killed and eight captured, no casualties being sustained by the attacking party.

Armoured motor-cars equipped with machine-guns are now playing a part in the war and have been most successful in dealing with the small parties of German mounted troops. In their employment our gallant Allies the Belgians, who are now fighting with us and acquitting themselves nobly, have shown themselves to be experts. They appear to regard Uhlan-hunting as a form of sport. The crews display the utmost dash and skill in this form of warfare, often going out several miles ahead of their own advanced troops and seldom failing to return loaded with spoils in the shape of Lancer caps, busbies, helmets, lances, rifles, and other trophies, which they distribute as souvenirs to the crowds in the market-places of the frontier towns.

An easy capture was recently effected by an Engineer telegraph lineman. Returning in the dark after repairing some air lines which had been cut by shell fire, he was passing through a wood when his horse shied at some figures crouching in a ditch. He called out ' Come out of it,' whereupon, to his surprise, three German cavalrymen emerged and surrendered. He marched them back to his headquarters.

Although the struggle in the northern area naturally attracts more attention, that on the Aisne still continues, though there is no alteration in the general situation. The enemy has made certain changes in the positions of his heavy artillery, with the result that one or two places which were formerly safe quarters are now subject to bombardment, while others which were only approachable at night or by crawling on hands and knees now serve as recreation-grounds. At one point even a marquee has been erected.

A story from this quarter illustrates a new use for the craters of the 'Black Marias.' An officer on patrol stumbled in the dark on to a German trench. He turned and made for the British lines, but the fire was so heavy that he had to throw himself on the ground and crawl. There was, however, no cover, and his chances were looking desperate when he saw close by an enormous hole made by one of these large shells. Into this he scrambled, and remained there for the whole ensuing day, and succeeded when night again came on in safely reaching our lines.

The following extract from a captured copy of the orders of the German 14th Reserve Corps, dated October 7, suggests some deterioration in the general discipline of one corps of the enemy, as well as shortage of supplies :—

It is notified that the troops must no longer count on the regular arrival of supplies. They must, therefore, utilise the resources of the country as much and as carefully as possible.

The regulations for the use of the iron rations must be strictly observed.

. . . . . .

In spite of all precautions complaints are continually being received that supply and ammunition columns constantly fail to arrive because they are stopped and unloaded by unauthorised persons. It is again notified that only the authorities to whom the supplies, etc., are consigned have the right to take delivery of them.

Official casualty lists of recent date which have been captured show that the losses of the Germans continue to be heavy. One infantry company in a single list reports 139 killed and wounded, or more than half its war establishment. Other companies have suffered almost as heavily. It further appears that the number of men reported 'missing'—that is, those who have fallen into the hands of the enemy or have become marauders—is much greater in Ersatz battalions than in first line units. This is evidence of the inferior quality of some of the reserves which are now being brought up to reinforce the enemy's field army, and is all the more encouraging since every day adds to our first line strength. The arrival of the Indian contingents has caused every one to realise that while the enemy is filling his depleted ranks with immature levies we have large reserves of perfectly fresh and thoroughly trained troops to draw upon.

October 20-25

Before the narrative of the progress of the fighting near the Franco-Belgian frontier subsequent to October 20 is continued, a brief description will be given of the movement of a certain fraction of our troops from its former line facing north, on the east of Paris, to its present position facing east, in the north-west corner of France, by which a portion of the British Army has been enabled to join hands with the incoming and growing stream of reinforcements. This is now an accomplished fact, as is generally known, and can therefore be explained in some detail without detriment. Mention will also be made of the gradual development up to October 20 in the nature of the operations in this quarter of the theatre of war, which has recently come into such prominence.

In its broad lines the transfer of strength by one combatant during the course of a great battle, which has just been accomplished, is somewhat remarkable. It can best be compared with the action of the Japanese during the battle of Mukden, when General Oku withdrew a portion of his force from his front, moved it northwards behind the line, and threw it into the fight again near the extreme left of the Japanese armies. In general direction, though not in scope of possible results, owing to the coastline being reached by the Allies, the parallel is complete. The Japanese force concerned, however, was much smaller than ours, and the distance covered by it was less than that from the Aisne to the Franco-Belgian frontier. General Oku's troops, moreover, marched, whereas ours were moved by march, rail, and motor.

What was implied in the actual withdrawal from contact with the enemy along the Aisne will be appreciated when the conditions under which we were then situated are recalled. In places the two lines were not 100 yards apart, and for us no movement was possible during daylight. In some of the trenches which were under enfilade fire our men had to sit all day long close under the traverses—as are called those mounds of earth which stretch like partitions at intervals across a trench, so as to give protection from lateral fire. Even where there was cover, such as that afforded by depressions or sunken roads, on the hillside below and behind our firing line any attempt to cross the intervening space was

met by fierce bursts of machine-gun and shell fire. The men in the firing line were on duty for twenty-four hours at a time, and brought rations and water with them when they came on duty, for none could be sent up to them during the day. Even the wounded could not be removed until dark.

The preliminary retirement of the units was therefore carried out gradually under cover of darkness. That the Germans only once opened fire upon them whilst so engaged was due to the care with which the operation was conducted, and also, probably, to the fact that the enemy were so accustomed to the recurrence of the sounds made by the reliefs of the men in the firing line and by the movement of the supply trains below, that they were misled as to what was actually taking place. What the operation amounted to on our part was the evacuation of the trenches, under carefully made arrangements with the French, who had to take our place in the trenches, the retirement to the river below—in many cases down a steep slope—the crossing of the river over the noisy plank roadways of floating or repaired bridges —which were mostly commanded by the enemy's guns—and the climb up to the top of the plateau on the south side. The rest of the move was a complicated feat of transportation, which cut across some of the lines of communication of our Allies ; but it requires no description here. In spite of the various difficulties, the whole strategic operation of transferring the large number of troops from the Aisne was carried out without loss and practically without a hitch.

As regards the change in the nature of the fighting in which we have recently been engaged, it has already been pointed out that the operations had up till then been of a preparatory nature, and that the Germans were obviously seeking to delay us by advanced troops whilst heavier forces were being got ready and brought up to the scene of action. It was known that they were raising a new army consisting of corps formed of Ersatz, volunteers, and other material which had not yet been drawn upon, and that part of it would in all probability be sent to the western theatre, either to cover the troops laying siege to Antwerp, in case that place should hold out, or, in the event of the capture of the fortress, to act in conjunction with the besieging force in a violent offensive movement towards the coast.

After the fall of Antwerp and the release of the besieging troops, there was a gradual increase in the strength of the opposition met with by us. The resistance of the detachments—which beyond the right extreme of the German fortified line near Béthune a fortnight ago consisted almost entirely of cavalry—grew more and more determined, as more infantry and guns came up into the front line, until Tuesday, October 20, when the arrival opposite us of a large portion of the new formations and a considerable number of heavy guns enabled the enemy to assume the offensive practically against the whole of our line, at the same time that they attacked the Belgians between us and the coast. The operations then really assumed a fresh complexion.

Since that date up to the 25th, apart from the operations on either side of us, there has been plenty of action to chronicle on our immediate front, where some of the heaviest fighting in which we have yet been engaged has taken place, resulting in immense loss to the Germans. On Wednesday, the 21st, the new German formations again pressed forward in force vigorously all along our line. On our right, south of the Lys, an attack on Violaines was repulsed with loss to the assailants. On the other hand, we were driven from some ground close by, to the north, but regained it by a counter-attack. Still farther north the Germans gained and retained some points. Their total casualties to the south-east of Armentières are estimated at over 6000.

On the north of the Lys, in our centre, a fiercely contested action took place near Le Gheir, which village was captured in the morning by the enemy and then retaken by us. In this direction the German casualties were also extremely heavy. They came on with the greatest bravery, in swarms, only to be swept away by our fire. One battalion of their 104th Regiment was practically wiped out, some 400 dead being picked up by us in our lines alone. Incidentally, by our counter-attack, we took 130 prisoners and released some 40 of our own men who had been surrounded and captured, including a subaltern of artillery, who had been cut off while observing from a point of vantage. It is agreeable to record that our men were very well treated by their captors, who were Saxons, being placed in cellars for protection from the bombardment of our own guns.

On our left our troops advanced against the German 26th Reserve Corps near Passchendaele and were met by a determined counter-offensive, which was driven back with great loss. At night the Germans renewed their efforts unsuccessfully in this quarter. At one point they tried a ruse which is no longer new. As they came up in a solid line two deep they shouted out, 'Don't fire; we are the Coldstream Guards.' But our men are getting used to tricks of this kind, and the only result of this 'slimness' was that they allowed the enemy's infantry to approach quite close before they swept them down with magazine fire. Apart from the 400 dead found near our lines in our centre, our patrols afterwards discovered some 300 dead farther out in front of our left, killed by our artillery.

Thursday, the 22nd, saw a renewal of the pressure against us. We succeeded, however, in holding our ground in nearly every quarter. South of the Lys the enemy attacked from La Bassée and gained Violaines and another point, but their effort against a third village was repulsed by artillery fire alone, the French and British guns working together very effectively. On the north of the river it was a day of minor attacks against us, which were all beaten back.

The Germans advanced in the evening against our centre and left, and were again hurled back, though they gained some of our trenches in the latter quarter. By this time the enemy had succeeded in bringing up several heavy howitzers, and our casualties were considerable.

On Friday, the 23rd, all action south of the Lys on our right was confined to that of the artillery, several of the hostile batteries being silenced by our fire. In the centre their infantry again endeavoured to force their way forward and were only repulsed after determined fighting, leaving many dead on the ground and several prisoners in our hands. North of the Lys attacks at different points were repulsed.

On our left the 23rd was a bad day for the Germans. Advancing in our turn, we drove them from some of the trenches out of which they had turned us on the previous evening, captured 150 prisoners, and released some of our men whom they had taken. As the Germans retreated our guns did great execution amongst them. They afterwards made five desperate assaults on our trenches, advancing in

mass and singing 'Die Wacht am Rhein' as they came on. Each assault was easily beaten back, our troops waiting until the enemy came to very close range before they opened fire with rifles and Maxims, causing terrible havoc in the solid masses.

During the fighting in this quarter on the night of the 22nd and on the 23rd, the German losses were again extremely heavy. We made over 600 prisoners during that time, and picked up 1500 dead, killed on the latter day alone. Much of the slaughter was due to the point-blank magazine fire of our men against the German assaults, while our field-guns and howitzers, working in perfect combination, did their share when the enemy were repulsed. As they fell back they were subjected to a shower of shrapnel. When they sought shelter in villages or buildings they were shattered and driven out by high-explosive shell and then again caught by shrapnel as they came into the open. The troops to suffer so severely were mostly of the 23rd Corps—one of their new formations. Certainly the way their advance was conducted showed a lack of training and faults in leading which the almost superhuman bravery of the soldiers could not counterbalance. It was a holocaust. The spectacle of these devoted men chanting a national song as they marched on to certain death was inspiring. It was at the same time pitiable. And if any proofs were needed that untrained valour alone cannot gain the day in modern war, the advance of the 23rd German Corps on October 23 most assuredly furnished it. Besides doing its share of execution on the hostile infantry, our artillery in this quarter brought down a German captive balloon. As some gauge of the rate at which the guns were firing at what was for them an ideal target, it may be mentioned that one field battery expended 1800 rounds of ammunition during the day.

On Saturday, the 24th, action on our right was once more confined to that of artillery, except at night, when the Germans pressed on, only to be repulsed. In the centre, near Armentières, our troops withstood three separate attempts of the enemy to push forward, our guns coming into play with good effect. Against our left the German 27th Corps made a violent attempt, with no success. On Sunday, the 25th, it was our turn to take the offensive. This was carried out by a portion of our left wing, which advanced, gained some ground, and took 2 guns and 80 prisoners. It is be-

lieved that 6 machine-guns fell to the French. In the centre the fighting was severe, though generally indecisive in result, and the troops in some places were engaged in hand-to-hand conflict. Towards evening we captured 200 prisoners. On the right, action was again confined to that of the guns.

Up to the night of the 25th, therefore, not only have we maintained our position against the great effort on the part of the enemy to break through to the west, or to force us back, which started on the 20th; we have on our left passed to the offensive. These six days, as may be gathered, have been spent by us in repelling a succession of desperate onslaughts. It is true that the efforts against us have been made to a great extent by partially trained men, some of whom appear to be suffering from lack of food. But it must not be forgotten that these troops, which are in great force, have only recently been brought into the field, and are, therefore, comparatively fresh. They are fighting also with the utmost determination, in spite of the fact that many of them are heartily sick of the war.

The struggle has been of the most severe and sanguinary nature, and it seems that success will favour that side which is possessed of most endurance or can bring up and fling fresh forces into the fray. Though we have undoubtedly inflicted immense loss upon the enemy, they have so far been able to fill up the gaps in their ranks and to return to the charge, and we have suffered heavily ourselves.

One feature of the tactics now employed has been the use of cavalry in dismounted action, for on both sides many of the mounted troops are fighting in the trenches alongside the infantry. Armoured motor-cars armed with Maxims and light quick-firing guns have also recently played a useful part on our side, especially in helping to eject the enemy lurking in villages and isolated buildings. Against such parties the combined action of the quick-firer against the snipers in buildings and the Maxim against them when they are driven into the open is most efficacious.

October 26-30

In spite of the great losses which they suffered in their attacks last week, the Germans have continued their offensive

towards the west almost continuously during the five days from October 26 to 30. Opposite us it has gradually grown in intensity and extent of application as more men and guns have been brought up and pushed into the fight, and it has developed into the most bitterly contested battle which has been fought in the western theatre of war.

The German artillery has to a large extent been increased by that transferred from round Antwerp. As regards infantry, it is possible that some of the additional troops now appearing on our front have been rendered available by the relaxation of the pressure against our Allies to the north of Ypres caused by the desperate and successful resistance made by the latter, by the harassing nature of the artillery fire brought to bear by our ships against the strip of country along the coast, and by the flooding of an area along the river Yser. Forces have been massed also from the south, whilst another of the new army corps has definitely made its début before us. And though the attempts to hack, or rather to blast and hack a way through us have been made in other directions, they have for the last few days been most seriously concentrated upon the neighbourhood of Ypres.

Whether the motive inspiring the present action of the Germans against that place is an ambition to win through to the port of Calais—as is to be gathered from articles in their newspapers—or whether the operation is due to a desire to drive the Allied forces out of the whole of Belgium, in order to complete the conquest of that country with a view to its annexation and to gain prestige with neutrals, is immaterial. What concerns us more closely is that they have been making, and are still pressing, a desperate attempt to gain the town.

On Monday, the 26th, south of the Lys, on our right, the enemy attacked Neuve Chapelle—one of the villages held by us—in the evening, advancing under cover of a wood. They managed to gain possession of a portion of it. North of the Lys, in the centre, bombardment alone was kept up, and some ground was made by us. A detached post which was attacked in force during the night drove back its assailants, who left fifty-six dead behind. Near our left the Germans developed a very strong attack on a section of our line to the east of Ypres. Though supported by a great mass of artillery this was checked. But it had two results. One was that our

position was readjusted. The other was that our extreme left alone advanced in conjunction with some of our Allies.

On Tuesday, the 27th, the Germans rather focused their principal attention on our right centre and right, and most desperate fighting took place for the possession of Neuve Chapelle. In spite of repeated counter-attacks by our troops the enemy during the day managed to hold on to the northern part of the village, which he had gained the day before. Towards evening we had gradually regained the great part of the place by step-by-step fighting when fresh hostile reinforcements were brought up and the entire village was captured by the enemy. They made several assaults against our whole front south of the Lys, but with the exception of their success at Neuve Chapelle won no advantage.

The combat for that place, as is usually the case with village fighting, was of the most murderous description, while it is believed that the enemy's losses in this quarter of the field generally were very great. An artillery officer who was observing their advance reports that the effects of our rifle and gun fire were stupendous, and that the Germans had to throw the corpses of their own men out of their trenches as they came on, in order to obtain cover. Four successive attacks were made, each by a different regiment, and in this way the whole of one division was engaged piecemeal in about the same locality. The last of these regiments has now been practically disposed of, and according to prisoners their condition is deplorable.

North of the river our centre was subjected to heavy shell fire from pieces of various sizes. Our guns were by no means idle, and one of our patrols found eleven Germans dead, and one rendered unconscious by fumes in a farm in which they had observed one of our lyddite shells detonate. Towards our left the readjustment of our line, commenced on Monday, was completed, and some redistribution of strength was effected. On the extreme left ground was gained.

Neuve Chapelle was again the scene of desperate fighting on Wednesday, the 28th, some of our Indian troops greatly distinguishing themselves by a well-conducted counter-attack, by which they drove the Germans out of the greater part of the place with the bayonet. On emerging from the village, however, they were exposed to the concentrated fire of machine-

guns, and had to remain contented with what they had gained. Farther on the left, during the morning, the enemy made attacks under cover of the usual heavy bombardment, but each effort was repulsed with great slaughter. One of our trenches was carried, and then recovered after a loss of 200 dead had been inflicted on the enemy. On our centre, north of the Lys, nothing of particular moment occurred. On the extreme left our advance was not pressed, and the enemy remained in possession of Becelaere. A night attack by them was repulsed.

Next day the centres of pressure were for the most part our two flanks. South of the Lys, against our right, the Germans delivered an assault which failed. In front of one battalion they are estimated to have left between 600 and 700 dead, whilst not far off a trench into which they had penetrated was recaptured by us at an expense to them of 70 killed and 14 prisoners.

In the centre little took place worthy of special record. A few Germans came in and surrendered voluntarily; and in this quarter we experienced for the first time in the northern theatre of war the action of the *Minenwerfer*, or trench mortar. It has a range of some 500 or 600 yards, and throws a bomb loaded with high explosive weighing up to 200 lbs., being fired at extreme elevation from the bottom of a pit in the trench. About midnight our line was attacked in two places. One of these efforts did not mature, as the ground over which the German infantry had to advance was well swept by our guns. In the other case the assault was carried out against one of our brigades by a force of some twelve battalions. With great self-restraint our men held their fire for forty minutes until the attackers got quite close, and then drove them back with a loss of 200 killed. The enemy penetrated into a portion of one of our trenches, but were driven out again, losing 80 men killed and captured.

The really important feature in this day's operations occurred north of the Lys, and consisted of an onslaught in great force made in the morning in the direction of Ypres. After a heavy cannonade the assault was driven home and a portion of our front line was forced back. By evening the lost ground was recovered, and in some places more than recovered, with the exception of one part to which the enemy

clung. Our losses were heavy, but not so severe as those of the enemy, who at one spot suffered enormously from the concentrated fire of our massed machine-guns.

Friday, the 30th, witnessed a renewal of the efforts against our right, but without success to the enemy. In the centre the bombardment was heavy. Indeed, so many shells fell round our positions that the telephone wires were frequently cut. The attack in the direction of Ypres generally was renewed. South-east of that town it was pressed in great force, and in places our line was again forced back a short distance; but on our left the oncoming Germans were stopped by our entanglements under close rifle fire, and after two efforts to advance gave way.

On Saturday, the 31st, a most determined attack was made upon our left and left centre, the pressure being specially severe against the latter portion of our position. Part of our line was driven back temporarily by sheer weight of metal and numbers, but was almost all recovered again before night. Against our centre the enemy did not advance, whilst against our right they were not nearly so active as farther north.

So far, with the assistance of the French, who have been co-operating most effectually, we have succeeded in maintaining our line, and in retaining possession of Ypres, upon the capture of which by the end of October the Germans had set their heart. As may have been gathered, the fighting of the past five days has been of the most desperate nature. It has been eminently a soldiers' battle; and without exaggeration or any undue self-congratulation it can be said that our men have behaved splendidly. In the face of heavy odds, and against the repeated onslaughts of great masses continually replaced by fresh men and backed by the almost continuous fire of an immense concentration of guns, they have by their dogged resistance well upheld the reputation of our army. Heavy as have been our losses, we have taken a far heavier toll from the enemy, and have prevented them gaining the object upon which all their energies have been concentrated. And not only our troops have maintained their traditions. Our French Allies have been fighting with all the dash for which they are famous, and from all accounts at Dixmude and along the Yser they have made a name for themselves which will never die. The Belgian Army has like-

wise resisted the furious onslaughts of the enemy with the utmost gallantry.

The German troops, also, have won our respect for the way in which they have advanced. Whether it is due to patriotism or the fear induced by an iron discipline, the fact remains that they have steadily pressed on to what in many cases must obviously have been certain death. That they are sometimes forced to go on is shown by the following answer to an interrogation put to a wounded prisoner :—

' I belong to the — Company of the —th Regiment of Infantry, of the — Division of the —th Corps. I was embodied in October, 1913. On mobilisation the weakly and those backward in training, to the number of about sixty per company, were withdrawn from the Active Regiment to form the nucleus of a Reserve Regiment, which was completed by Badeners and Württembergers belonging to the 2nd Ban of the Landwehr. We received new " field grey " uniform.

' After ten weeks of hard training we travelled for three days and two nights from Thuringia up to Achiet (?), where we remained in reserve. We were told that our nearest enemies were the English.

On the 17th October and the next day we performed such fatiguing forced marches that many men fell out on the road. On the 19th we each received 285 rounds of ammunition, and had our first taste of fire. Although we were told that there were only *francs-tireurs* in front of us, I saw French cavalrymen and no other foes.

' From this day onward the battle was uninterrupted. On the 20th my section received orders to go forward to the attack, and the officers warned us that if we gave way fire would be opened upon us from behind. This threat was carried into effect when the losses we suffered compelled us to retire. Indeed, it was by a German bullet that I was wounded.

' Having fallen on the ground, I remained between the lines without food or care for two days, at the end of which time I dragged myself to a ruined house.

' During the whole of this time the German shells, which were short, were falling about my shelter, some hundreds of paces from the French lines. These having advanced on the 24th, I myself moved forward, called out to a passing patrol, and surrendered.

' We have received no distribution of food since our arrival in France.

' The " Commandant " of my company was the Reserve Lieutenant ——, twenty-eight years of age. The Colonel, whose name I don't know, also belonged to the Reserve, as did all the other officers of the Regiment.

'The officers told us that if we fell into the hands of the French we should be sent to the Foreign Legion, and certainly should be massacred by the Moroccans.

'I only saw one man shot. He was a priest who, they said, was a spy.'

The results of the inundation to the north of Dixmude have been observed by our aviators, who have seen numbers of the enemy collected in groups on the dykes which intersect the flooded area where, according to report, some of the German heavy artillery is bogged. Our airmen have also been able to harass advancing hostile columns by bomb dropping and machine-gun fire. The tactical transfer of troops behind the German front line is now carried out to a great extent by motor omnibuses, of which long strings are visible from above.

During the past few days large numbers of refugees have been streaming back along all the roads from Belgium, and crowding the empty trains returning from the front, upon which the French have most humanely allowed them to travel. In these whole families may be seen jostled together in horse-trucks, together with what few household goods they have been able to carry away; but the less fortunate have to trudge the roads, making use of any shelter they can find. The inhabitants of the district within our zone of operations, also, line the roads from morning to night and listen to the sound of the guns, there being nothing else for them to do. As the dull roar waxes or wanes so does confidence die away or return; and in such alternations of fear and hope is each weary day passed. All this traffic to and fro of civilians entails the utmost vigilance in order to guard against espionage.

October 31–*November* 3

Before the chronological record of the course of events is resumed, a short description will be given of the part in the battle played on Saturday, October 31, by the 14th (County of London) Battalion of the London Regiment, or, as it is far better known, 'The London Scottish.' Reference has already been made to its action, and the Commander-in-Chief's message to the officer commanding has been quoted, but no details of what happened have been given.

The occasion is not looked upon as a special one because

this battalion acquitted itself well, for that was regarded as a matter of course, nor because it was done better than the Regular battalions, who have been doing as much, if not more, for weeks on end. It is a special event because it forms an epoch in the military history of the British Empire, and marks the first time that a complete unit of our Territorial Army has been thrown into the fight alongside its sister units of the Regulars. Briefly, what happened was this :—

On Saturday, being ordered to take up a section of the firing line to support some of our cavalry, and having advanced to its position under heavy fire from field-guns, howitzers, and machine-guns, the battalion reached a point where further movement forward was impossible. There it maintained itself till dusk, when it proceeded to entrench. From 9 that night till 2 A.M. on Sunday the Germans made numerous attacks on the Scottish line, all of which were repulsed by rifle fire.

At 2 A.M. they made their great effort and assaulted the front and left of the position in great force. A considerable number succeeded by a détour in getting round the flank of the regiment. A large proportion of these were engaged by the companies in support and reserve, while others penetrated between the first and second lines of trenches and assailed our firing line in the rear. While fighting with rifle and bayonet was going on both in front and immediately behind the firing line, the reserve company still farther behind made repeated bayonet charges against the enemy who had got round, and so prevented an entire envelopment of the battalion. Behind the firing line the scene of combat was lit up by a blazing house which the Germans had set alight.

At dawn it was discovered that large numbers of the enemy had, according to custom, worked round both flanks with machine-guns, and a retirement was carried out. This was effected under a cross fire from machine-guns and rifles. Naturally in an encounter of this nature the battalion suffered heavy loss ; but though unable to maintain its position it acquitted itself with gallantry and coolness in a situation of peculiar difficulty, and, following the national motto of *Nemo me impune lacessit,* inflicted far more damage on the enemy than it received.

To turn to the general narrative, on Sunday, November 1, the full violence of the enemy's attack again fell on our left, their main efforts being still directed slightly south of Ypres. Such was the force of the onslaught and the weight of artillery supporting it that our line was temporarily driven back. It was soon readjusted, however, and by evening the situation in this quarter was the same as it had been twenty-four hours earlier. That night some shell were thrown into Ypres itself.

Farther to the south the Germans had during the previous night retaken the village of Messines and had also captured Wytschaete. By 11 A.M. our cavalry, working in co-operation with the French, drove them out of the latter place by a brilliant bayonet charge; but we did not occupy it. A few of the prisoners taken at this place were only seventeen years of age, and said that they had had practically no training and little food; some had never fired a rifle before.

The fact that Messines still remained in hostile hands necessitated a slight readjustment of our front in the centre, but apart from this there was no change in this quarter, the bombardment continuing all day. During the action round these two villages the Germans moving across our front suffered very greatly from the massed fire of our horse artillery at short range; but though they fell literally in heaps they still came on with admirable determination. South of the Lys some trenches which had been lost on the previous night were recaptured by us. Otherwise the situation remained as it had been; no attacks were delivered against us; and the enemy contented himself with bombarding our trenches. A heavy battery was knocked out by our artillery fire. One of our prisoners—a Saxon professor—who was captured on the first day he entered the field, stated as his opinion that Germany realised that she had failed in her object, and was only fighting in order to obtain good terms. What his opinion is worth remains to be seen. During the afternoon a German aeroplane was captured quite uninjured.

On Monday, the 2nd, on our left, pressure was still kept up towards Ypres, and at first our line was once more forced back, but it was restored towards evening by a vigorous advance carried out in co-operation with the French, who were rendering us very timely assistance. The maximum

effort of the Germans on this day, however, was more to the south of Ypres, as if to drive a wedge between the town on the north and Armentières on the south ; and the bombardment of our positions in this quarter of the field was especially heavy, though it was well replied to by a concentric fire from our guns and those of the French. The French counter-attacked in the direction of Wytschaete, which remained disputed ground, fiercely blazing amidst a hail of shell from both sides.

More to the south the enemy advanced in force, but were checked. Still farther towards our right a hostile attack in the neighbourhood of Armentières met with the same fate. On our extreme right several assaults were repulsed, though at one or two points the Germans gained ground slightly, obtaining possession of Neuve Chapelle.

The inundation round Nieuport had by this day reached the enemy's trenches, and it is stated that two heavy guns and some field artillery had to be abandoned in the mud.

Tuesday, the 3rd, was, on the whole, a comparatively uneventful day, which enabled our troops to get a much-needed rest. In front of Ypres the German infantry ceased to press, but to the south, in the neighbourhood of Wytschaete and Hollebeke, they made unsuccessful attempts to get forward, effective counter-attacks being delivered by the French and British. In this quarter the fighting was of a severe nature.

South of the river there were some minor attacks against our trenches, which were beaten off. It seemed that the violence of the German efforts was abating, even the cannonade being in some places less heavy than it had been.

November 4–10

In describing the operations for the six days from November 4 to 9, it can be said that during that period the Germans have nowhere along our front made an attack in great force, such as was launched against Ypres at the end of October. What they may be contemplating remains to be seen. Their policy has appeared to be to wear us out by continual bombardment interspersed with local assaults at different points. As regards their artillery attack—which has now continued without cessation for days—wonder is aroused as to when this

prodigal expenditure of ammunition will cease, for it has not produced its obviously calculated effect of breaking the defence in preparation for the advance of their infantry. So far the latter have been the chief sufferers from the tactics employed.

On Wednesday, the 4th, they renewed the attack east of Ypres; but their efforts bore no resemblance to those which had preceded it, being more in the nature of a demonstration in force than a serious attempt to drive in our line, and it was beaten off with ease. By then our men had been reinforced, had enjoyed some rest, and had had time to improve their trenches in different ways. Moreover, the consciousness that they had repelled one great effort of the enemy was a moral factor of no small value.

Farther to the south, on our left centre, the French advanced under cover of our guns and made some progress in spite of the heavy fire brought to bear on them from the enemy's massed batteries. On our centre all was quiet. On the right our Indian troops scored a success by capturing and filling in some trenches in which the enemy had established himself only fifty yards from our lines under cover of some heavy artillery brought up after dark.

On our extreme left, one of our howitzer batteries—whose fire was being most effectively directed—selected as its first target a farm from which a machine-gun was harassing our infantry. It scored a hit at the first round and knocked out the machine-gun. The second target was a house occupied by snipers. This was set alight by a shell, and when the occupants bolted they came under the rapid fire of our infantry. The third target was another building from which the Germans were driven and then caught in the open by shrapnel. One of our heavy batteries, also, obtained several direct hits on the enemy's guns.

Thursday was another comparatively quiet day, there being no attempt at an infantry attack against any point of our line. South-east of Ypres the Germans maintained a heavy bombardment on one section of our front, but generally speaking their artillery fire was not so heavy as it had been. Somewhat to the south the French made some slight progress and recaptured some ground.

Farther to the south two villages which the enemy had captured and their line on a ridge close by were heavily bom-

barded by the British and French artillery. From the high ground to the west the effect of this cannonade could be seen to some extent, though the villages under fire were partially obscured from view by the smoke of the bursting shells, and resembled the craters of volcanoes belching fire and fumes. At one place the gaunt wreck of the old church tower and the blackened remains of a few houses round it would emerge for a moment, only to be again blotted out in the pall of smoke. The long, straggling villages, when they became temporarily visible, seemed to melt away, and assume odd and fantastic shapes as the houses crumbled and the blocks of masonry were thrown hither and thither by the blasting effect of lyddite and melinite.

The result of this artillery work was most satisfactory. When the Germans were seen to be running from the shelter which had ceased to act as such, they were caught and mowed down by the rapid fire of the French field artillery. Against a suitable target the action of the French 75 mm. field-guns—'les soixante-quinze,' as they are always affectionately called—is literally terrific, and must be seen to be realised. On the whole, the ground which the Germans have gained in this direction has so far proved a somewhat barren acquisition. It is so exposed that it proves a death-trap for their troops, and they can derive no advantage from its possession.

Along the rest of our line nothing of special interest occurred. Farther south our aeroplanes and those of the French scored a success by partially destroying two of the old forts of Lille. Fort Englos was blown up on the 4th, and Fort Carnot on the 5th. They were most probably used as magazines, and may have been of some tactical importance as *points d'appui* in the line of entrenchments.

On Friday, the 6th, the attack was renewed south of the Menin-Ypres high road, but it was repulsed without difficulty. Against the south-east of Ypres, which town had been subjected to a bombardment during the night and was also shelled during the day, a fairly strong advance was made in the afternoon, and the enemy gained some ground. The French, however, made a counter-stroke supported by us, and by nightfall recovered all the lost ground. The French attack on the two villages which had been shelled on Thursday made considerable progress, one point being captured, but the

enemy contrived to render the position untenable, and our Allies had retired from the hill by dusk. On our centre nothing of particular interest occurred. On our right, south of the Lys, the enemy made two unsuccessful night attacks.

On Saturday, the 7th, on our left the enemy in the afternoon again attacked on the east and south-east of Ypres. Along the Menin Road our line was at one point forced back, only to be regained after a few minutes. About 4 P.M. the Germans appeared to be massing opposite our line south-east of Ypres, and the pressure was for a time severe, although the attack was not driven home. Slightly farther to the south the fighting continued with unabated fury, and resulted in a gain to our Allies. About 400 of the enemy advanced from the cover of a wood against the French, half of them, with most reckless bravery, came on to close quarters, and were all shot or bayoneted. A tremendous cannonade was maintained by both sides in this direction, the Allies pouring a hail of shells all along the ridge facing them held by the Germans, and the latter bombarding some high ground and a valley to the east of it in our possession. Three machine-guns were captured by us during the day.

On our centre there was a recrudescence of activity on the enemy's part. During the previous night some six battalions of Saxons had succeeded in capturing some of our trenches, only to be driven out by a counter-attack which resulted in one officer and seventy men being taken prisoners. The Germans, however, refused to accept defeat, and, returning to the charge, again occupied some of our trenches, and penetrated into a wood. They were again counter-attacked and cleared out of the wood, but continued in possession of part of our line and also some houses which commanded them. Farther south, again, the enemy behaved with great boldness, sapping up to within a short distance of our trenches.

Some of the prisoners captured on this day were very young. They stated that their corps had lately been brought up to strength with new recruits who had received only a few weeks' training.

Throughout the recent fighting Sunday has proved to be a day of activity, and November 8 was no exception to the rule. On the left the morning passed quietly so far as the British were concerned. To the south-east of Ypres the French con-

tinued to give us considerable support, and pressed forward. At 2.30 P.M. the daily attack on our line was made—this time in force to the north of the Menin-Ypres high road; and again did the enemy succeed in temporarily piercing our front. They were driven back, however, and all the ground lost by us was regained before dark. After this repulse 107 dead Germans were counted in front of one battalion, the total hostile force engaged being estimated at 2000.

These strong attacks are accompanied or preceded by attempts to press at other points, which are usually attended with heavy loss. An instance of the cost to the enemy of these subsidiary operations occurred on this day, when one of our battalions killed 47 Germans, this number being actually counted in front of our trenches, and captured 51. It is calculated that on Sunday their casualties in killed and wounded in front of one small section of our line were about 1200. Ypres itself was again subjected to heavy shelling, and some damage was done to the town.

In front of our right centre the enemy fell back slightly, while farther south, to the north of the Lys, he continued to occupy the trenches and houses he had secured, but was unable to reinforce this point and so consolidate his position, for the ground was swept by the fire of our guns and enfiladed from our trenches. To the south of the Lys the hostile attacks were renewed without success on the night of the 7th-8th. On our right also a minor effort met with the same fate.

Monday, the 9th, was a comparatively quiet day. On our left the shelling was less. In this direction the Germans for the time being desisted from making attacks in force, and confined their efforts to minor assaults and to the wanton destruction of Ypres, which with Louvain and Reims is apparently to be included among the monuments to German 'culture.' During the fighting of the 7th, 8th, and 10th, 110 prisoners and 6 machine-guns were captured by us in this quarter.

Slightly to the south the French made some progress, while on our centre the situation remained much the same as it has been. The houses and trenches gained by the Germans remained in their hands during the day, but measures were taken to overcome their resistance, and at night part of the ground was retaken by us. On our right, during the night of

the 8th-9th a German trench was captured; otherwise the situation did not alter.

Night attacks have been of regular occurrence at different points, and are made apparently more with a view to annoying our troops and preventing them sleeping than with any other object. Sometimes, of course, the advance has been of a more serious nature, and has been carried out by large bodies. In such cases the Germans have so far invariably lost heavily, and even if they have succeeded in gaining our first line of trenches, have almost always been driven out again. The demonstrations would appear to be proportionately more costly and even more useless than the heavier attacks. Similar tactics were a feature of the fighting on the Aisne, and to judge by the diaries we have obtained from German soldiers their futility is fully appreciated by the men. They are usually made from the trenches in rear of the front line, the latter being only lightly held.

The front lines of both sides are now at many points so close that our men amuse themselves by listening to what goes on in the enemy's trenches. The Germans frequently cheer themselves up with music or singing, while on one occasion the usual programme was varied by a violent quarrel which appeared to have culminated in a free fight.

On the whole there is evidence to show that the Germans are beginning to be affected by their heavy losses. From prisoners it is gathered that the young men of the new corps cannot withstand the fatigues and privations of campaigning, and that the middle-aged men lack ardour. From the same source, also, it is learned that recruits who have not previously served have only received some eight or nine weeks' training instead of the twelve weeks' course prescribed for them, that they have had practically no instruction in musketry, and that they have not practised entrenching.

On the other hand, too much can be made of these side-lights on the present condition of the enemy. They are still fighting with a stubbornness and recklessness which, whatever its futility, is remarkable when exhibited by forces of which a large proportion consists of comparatively untrained men. The following two incidents serve to illustrate their courage :—

During the fighting near Ypres a force consisting of about one company of infantry advancing against us was enfiladed

by one of our machine-guns, with the result that they were all killed except six men who crawled away wounded. The corpses lay in a regular row. After nightfall another company of the Germans, nothing daunted, advanced and dug themselves in on the line upon which the bodies of their comrades were lying. Again, on November 4, some of the enemy's cavalry at dusk charged a trench held by the French. Every single horse was killed ; but those riders who were not hit continued the charge on foot, the last survivors being slain on the very parapet of the trench.

And, whatever deterioration there may be in the material now being drafted into the ranks of our enemy, it must be admitted that the Prussian war machine, acting on a nation previously inured to the sternest discipline, has obtained the most remarkable results. The Germans have up to the present time been able to make good their losses, to continue to deliver repeated blows with fresh men when required and where required, and to concentrate large forces in different directions. It is true that a considerable proportion of the masses recently thrown into the field against the British has consisted of hastily trained and immature men ; but the great fact remains that these ill-assorted levies have not hesitated to advance against highly trained troops.

In spite of lack of officers, in spite of inexperience, boys of sixteen and seventeen have faced our guns, marched steadily up to the muzzles of our rifles, and have met death in droves, without flinching. Such is the effect of a century of national discipline. That the men subjected to it are the victims of an autocratic military caste does not alter the fact that they have accepted that system as necessary to the attainment of national ideals. However discordant the elements which make up the German Empire, by the force of the Prussian war machine they have one and all been welded together to be able to fight for national existence, and by their actions it is evident that for them ' Deutschland über Alles ' is no empty cry.

November 10-12

The diminution in force of what may by a paraphrase be described as the German *Drang nach Westen* in this quarter

has not lasted long. The section of front to the north of us was the first to meet the recrudescence of violence in the shape of an attack by the enemy in the neighbourhood of Dixmude and Bixschoote. Our turn came next, and after eight days of a comparative relaxation of pressure—from Tuesday the 3rd to Tuesday the 10th—the 11th saw a repetition of the great attempt to break through our line to the French coast.

What was realised might happen has happened. In spite of the immense losses suffered by the enemy during the five days' attack against Ypres, which lasted from October 29 to the 2nd of this month, the cessation of their more violent efforts on the latter day was not an abandonment of the whole project, but a temporary relinquishment of the main offensive until fresh troops should be massed to carry on what was proving to be a somewhat costly and difficult operation.

Meanwhile, as has been pointed out, the interval was employed in endeavouring to wear out the Allies by repeated local attacks of varying force and to shatter them by a prolonged and concentrated bombardment. By the 11th, therefore, it seems that they must have considered that they had attained both objects, for on that day, as will be described, recommenced the desperate battle for the possession of Ypres and its neighbourhood. Though the struggle has not yet come to an end, this much can be said: The Germans have gained some ground, but they have not captured Ypres. In repulsing the enemy so far we have naturally suffered heavy casualties. But battles of this fierce and prolonged nature cannot but be costly to both sides; and we have the satisfaction of knowing that we have foiled the enemy in what appears at present to be his main object in the western theatre of operations, and have inflicted immensely greater loss on him than those suffered by ourselves.

To carry the narrative on for the three days, the 10th, 11th, and 12th November, Tuesday the 10th was for us uneventful. Beyond our left flank the enemy advanced in force against the French, but were repulsed. On our left, however, along the greater part of our front the shelling was less severe; and no infantry attacks took place. South-east of Ypres the enemy kept up a heavy bombardment against our line as well as that of the French; and on our left centre

the situation remained unchanged, both sides contenting themselves with a furious cannonade.

In our centre the Germans retained their hold on the small extent of ground they had gained from us, but in doing so incurred heavy loss from our artillery and machine-gun fire. Incidentally, one of the houses held by them was so knocked about by our fire that its defenders bolted. On their way to the rear they were met by reinforcements under an officer who halted them, evidently in an endeavour to persuade them to return. While the parley was going on one of our machine-guns was quietly moved to a position of vantage, whence it opened a most effective fire on the group. On our right one of the enemy's saps which was being pushed towards our line was attacked by us and all the men in it were captured.

As has been said, Wednesday, the 11th, was another day of desperate fighting. So soon as day broke the Germans opened up on our trenches to the north and south of Menin-Ypres Road what was probably the most furious artillery fire that they have yet employed against us, and a few hours later followed up this bombardment by an infantry assault in force. This was carried out by the 1st and 4th Brigades of the Guard Corps, which, as we now know from prisoners, had been sent for in order to make a supreme effort to capture Ypres, that task having proved too heavy for the Infantry of the Line.

As the attackers surged forward they were met by our frontal fire, and since they were moving diagonally across part of our front were also taken in flank by artillery, rifles, and machine-guns. Though their casualties before they reached our line must have been enormous, such was their resolution and the momentum of the mass that, in spite of the splendid resistance of our troops, they succeeded in breaking through our line in three places near the road. They penetrated for some distance into the woods behind our trenches, but were counter-attacked and again enfiladed by machine-guns and driven back to the line of trenches, a certain portion of which they succeeded in holding, in spite of our efforts to expel them. What their total losses must have been during the advance can to some extent be gauged from the fact that the number of dead left in the woods behind our line alone amounted to 700.

A simultaneous effort made to the south of the road, as part of the same operation, though not carried out by the Guard Corps, failed entirely, for when the attacking infantry massed in the woods close to our line, our guns opened upon them with such effect that they did not push the assault home.

As generally happens in operations in wooded country, the fighting was to a great extent carried on at close quarters, and was of the most desperate and confused description. Indeed, the scattered bodies of the enemy who penetrated into the woods in rear of our position could neither go backwards nor forwards, and were nearly all killed or captured.

The portion of the line south-east of Ypres held by us was heavily shelled, but did not undergo any very serious infantry attack. That occupied by the French, however, was both bombarded and fiercely assaulted. On the rest of our front, save for the usual bombardment, all was comparatively quiet. On the right one of our trenches was mined and then abandoned. So soon as it was occupied by the enemy the charges were fired, and several Germans were blown to pieces.

Thursday, the 12th, was marked by a partial lull in the fighting all along our line. To the north of us the German force which had crossed the Yser and entrenched on the left bank was annihilated by a night attack with the bayonet executed by the French. Slightly to the south the enemy was forced back for a distance of about three-quarters of a mile. Immediately to our left the French were strongly attacked and driven back a short distance, our extreme left having to conform to the movement. But our Allies soon recovered the ground they had lost, which enabled us to advance also. To the south-east of Ypres, the enemy's snipers were very active. On our centre and right the enemy's bombardment was maintained, but nothing worthy of special note occurred.

The fact that on this day the advance against our line in front of Ypres was not pushed home, after such an effort as had been made on Wednesday, tends to show that for the moment at least the attacking troops had had enough.

Although the failure of this great attack by the Guard Corps to accomplish its object cannot yet be described as a

decisive event, it possibly marks the culmination, if not the close, of a second stage in the attempt to capture Ypres, and is therefore not without significance. It has also a dramatic interest of its own. Having once definitely failed to achieve this object by means of sheer weight of numbers, as already explained, and having done their best to wear us down in the manner already described, the Germans brought up fresh picked troops to carry Ypres salient by an assault from north, south, and east.

That the Guard Corps should have been selected to act against the eastern edge of the salient may perhaps be taken as a proof of the necessity felt by the Germans to gain this point in the line, and their dogged perseverance in the pursuance of their objective claims our whole-hearted admiration. The failure of one great attack, heralded as it was by impassioned appeals to the troops, made in the presence of the Emperor himself, but carried out by partially trained men, has been only the signal for another desperate effort in which the place of honour was assigned to the *corps d'élite* of the German Army.

It must be admitted that that corps has retained that reputation for courage and contempt of death which it earned in 1870, when Emperor William I., after the battle of Gravelotte, wrote: 'My Guard has found its grave in front of St. Privat.' And the swarms of men who came up so bravely to the British rifles in the woods round Ypres repeated the tactics of forty-four years ago, when their dense columns, toiling up the slopes of St. Privat, melted away under the fire of the French.

That the Germans are cunning fighters and are well up in all the tricks of the trade has been frequently pointed out. For instance, they often succeed in ascertaining what regiment or brigade is opposed to them, and, owing to their knowledge of English, are able to employ the information to some purpose. On one recent occasion, having by some means discovered the name of the commander of the company holding a trench they were attacking, they called on him by name, asking if Captain —— was there. Fortunately, the pronunciation of the spokesman was somewhat defective, and curiosity was rewarded by discovering that both the officer in question and his men were very much there.

There are reports from so many different quarters of the enemy having been seen wearing British and French uniforms that it is impossible to doubt their truth. One remarkable and absolutely authentic case occurred during the fighting near Ypres. A man dressed in a uniform which resembled that of a British Staff officer suddenly appeared near our trenches, and walked along the line, asking if many casualties had been suffered, and stating that the situation was serious, and that a general retirement had been ordered. A similar visit was reported by several men in different trenches, and orders were issued that this strange officer was to be detained if again seen. Unluckily, he did not make another appearance.

The following remarks extracted from a German soldier's diary are published, not because there is reason to believe that they are justified as regards the conduct of the German officers, but because they are of interest as a human document :—

'*2nd November.*—Before noon sent out in a regular storm of bullets by order of the major. These gentlemen, the officers, send their men forward in the most ridiculous way. They themselves remain far behind safely under cover. Our leadership is really scandalous. Enormous losses on our side, partly from the fire of our own people, for our leaders neither know where the enemy lies nor where our own troops are, so that we are often fired on by our own men. It is a marvel to me that we have got on as far as we have done. Our captain fell, also all our section leaders, and a large number of our men. Moreover, no purpose was served by this advance, for we remained the rest of the day under cover, and could go neither forward nor back, nor even shoot. A trench we had taken was not occupied by us, and the English naturally took it back at night. That was the sole result. Then, when the enemy had again entrenched themselves, another attack was made costing us many lives and fifty prisoners. It is simply ridiculous, this leadership. If only I had known it before !

'My opinion of the German officers has changed. An adjutant shouted to us from a trench far to the rear to cut down a hedge which was in front of us. Bullets were whistling round from in front and from behind. The gentleman himself, of course, remained behind. The 4th company has now no leaders but a couple of N.C.O.'s. When will my turn come ? I hope to goodness I shall get home again !

'Still in the trenches. Shells and shrapnel burst without ceasing. In the evening a cup of rice and one-third of an apple per man. Let us hope peace will soon come. Such a war is really too awful. The

English shoot like mad. If no reinforcements come up, especially heavy artillery, we shall have a poor look-out, and must retire.

'The first day I went quietly into the fight with an indifference which astonished me. To-day, for the first time in advancing, when my comrades right and left fell, felt rather nervous, but lost that feeling again soon. One becomes horribly indifferent. Picked up a piece of bread by chance. Thank God! At least something to eat.

'There are about 70,000 English who must be attacked from all four sides and destroyed. They defend themselves, however, obstinately.'

His Majesty the King's message of congratulation to the Commander-in-Chief has caused the liveliest satisfaction amongst all ranks.[1]

[1 See *Military*, I, p. 437]

November 13-15

The nature of the situation on our front has not altered since the last letter. The Germans have continued to press generally along our line and have focused their attention mostly round Ypres, though there has up to now not been a resumption of the violent attacks against that place. For the last ten days the weather has been much against aerial reconnaissances. It has either been so misty that nothing can be seen or so windy as to interfere with flying. There has also been a good deal of rain, which has added to the discomforts of active service.

Before the course of events during the three days November 13, 14, and 15 is given, it may be mentioned that the incident recorded in the last summary of the blowing up of some of the enemy in a mined trench on the night of the 11th has had a curious sequel. Amidst the débris hurled into our own trenches by the explosion was found the identity disc of a German soldier belonging to a regiment about whose presence in this quarter there has been much doubt.

Friday, the 13th, was windy with much rain. Trying as life in the trenches is under such conditions, our men have at least the consolation of knowing that the enemy were in a worse plight, for the wind blew steadily in their faces. On our left the morning passed in desultory shelling, which gradually swelled in the afternoon into a fierce bombardment of the section of our line running south to the Menin-Ypres Road. This was the prelude to an attack upon the whole line round Ypres. The enemy rushed our trenches at one point, but

they were driven out again, and the assault was repulsed. Here, again, our losses, though heavy, were much less than those of the Germans. As each successive attempt to take Ypres by assault fails, the bombardment of the unhappy town is renewed with ever-increasing fury.

Farther to the south, on our left centre, the situation remained practically unchanged, a little ground being lost here and there and then regained.

On our centre and right, and indeed along the whole of our line, the hostile artillery appears to have received orders on this day to search the area in rear of our trenches. This no doubt is a part of the policy of wearing down. It is naturally welcome to the men in the trenches that the enemy should expend ammunition on the mere chance of getting a shell or two into our transport or into some brigade or divisional headquarters.

On the right, on the night of the 13th-14th, a German trench was taken by a portion of one of our battalions, the occupants being bayoneted or taken prisoners. A part of another battalion which also advanced during the night encountered some of the enemy who were attempting a similar operation. A hand-to-hand fight ensued in which we came off the victors, killing 25 Germans and only losing two ourselves.

Saturday was very cold. There was also some rain. On our left, proceedings were started with the usual heavy shelling, and the Germans again resumed the offensive in the afternoon south of the Menin-Ypres Road, with a similar result to that obtained on the previous day. They penetrated our line at one or two points ; but were soon driven out and the line was almost completely restored. Farther to the south the French made an attack near Wytschaete and gained some ground under cover of a heavy fire from their guns. In the afternoon our left centre was subjected to shelling alone, and in our centre Armentières was subjected to similar treatment. The town is now practically deserted by its inhabitants.

During the day Béthune was bombarded by the enemy, who continued to devote his attention to towns, villages, and roads in rear of our line rather than to the trenches themselves.

On Sunday, the 15th, on our left, east of Ypres, a well-

conducted counter-attack was carried out against that portion of the line occupied by the enemy on the previous day, where he had established himself in some stables and trenches. Two attempts had already failed, when, at 5.30 A.M., a gun was brought up to within 300 yards range. After four rounds had been fired a storming party succeeded in carrying the position. The subaltern in command being killed, the attack was led by a company sergeant-major. This non-commissioned officer was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal, but has since died of his wounds.

The bombardment slackened considerably in this quarter during the day. About 3 P.M. a half-hearted attack was executed up the Menin Road, but the enemy never got to close quarters. On the south-east of Ypres, between Hollebeke and Wytschaete, there was some hard fighting, in which the French held their ground.

On our left centre nothing occurred beyond the usual shelling. In the centre we scored a local success. Some of the trenches and houses lately captured by the Germans were heavily bombarded by our howitzers, with the result that the defenders were bolted from the position and caught by the fire of our machine-guns as they retired, losing about half their number. On our right all was quiet.

The weather on this day was about the worst we have yet experienced. It was bitterly cold, and rain fell in torrents. Nevertheless, in spite of all difficulties, our aviators carried out a successful reconnaissance. For some time they hovered over the German lines observing the emplacements of batteries and searching the roads for hostile columns in the midst of a storm of driving snow and sleet which was encountered at high altitudes.

Further information has recently come to hand regarding the enemy's methods of sniping and spying upon our dispositions. Non-commissioned officers are offered Iron Crosses if they will penetrate our lines at night. Those that attempt this work, having discarded boots, helmets, and other impedimenta, crawl as close as possible to our defences and try to attract the attention of one of our sentries by throwing a stone in a direction contrary to that in which they are crawling. This generally causes the neighbouring sentries to fire, thus betraying their positions and that of our line of trenches.

These spies or snipers often wear khaki uniform and woollen caps similar to those worn by our men, and thus disguised sometimes succeed in getting right behind our lines to favourable spots from which they shoot men passing to and fro. Many of them speak English well, and display great ingenuity and effrontery in getting out of tight corners.

Another reason for penetrating our lines is the cutting of telephone wires; and behind one section of our front the breaks have of late been very frequent. That the damage has not been entirely due to bursting shells has now been proved by the capture of one of the enemy's secret agents carrying wire-cutters and a rifle. The man was known to have been on intimate terms with the Germans before they retired from the area now occupied by us. He was shot.

The following is an account of the heroic conduct of a French medical officer who, while in charge of the Medical Corps of one of the French divisions, was attending to the wounded in the Civil Hospital at Ypres during the bombardment of that place. On November 9 he commenced a letter explaining the situation at that time:

'I have the honour to inform you that for the last four days, with the help of volunteer assistants, I have been attending to 54 German wounded at the Civil Hospital at Ypres. The hospital has been struck by six shells, one of which was an incendiary shell.

'Bread is failing, and my assistants are sharing their own with the wounded Germans. . . .'

The letter continued that, to a suggestion that, since the position of the hospital and the danger incurred by their own men was known to the Germans, and these considerations did not affect them, there was no reason why the French should concern themselves any longer about their fate, his answer had been as follows:

'I replied that our superiority consisted precisely in showing to this race of vandals that we possess those humanitarian feelings of which they seem to be devoid, and that we should do this because example is the only law which nations obey. If we imitate the Germans there is no reason why the present state of things should not continue for ever, for we are merely descending to their level, whereas the mission of France is to elevate the Germans to our own.

'So long as I remain here, by your leave, I will continue to look after the wounded Germans, showing them that a French doctor laughs at their shells, and only knows his duty.'

On November 10, when the situation improved slightly, he wrote:

'Two nursing sisters have returned from Poperinghe crying, driven hither by remorse for having abandoned their sick charges. . . .

'I am continuing to dress the wounded. There are now only 52. Two have just died. The others are in a very grave condition; their wounds are suppurating. All the men but one are in bed: one is suffering from tetanus.'

This was the officer's last message, though, with the nuns, he remained in that hell for at least three days longer. He is reported to have been killed by a shell on the 13th or 14th, and on the morning of the 14th the surviving wounded were in sole charge of the nuns, who had remained faithful to the last. The Frenchman had died at his post tending to the maimed and suffering enemy. And his devotion was not in vain, for on the evening of the 14th the wounded Germans for whom he had laid down his life were taken to a place of safety.

It is with great grief that the Army has learnt of the death of Field-Marshal Earl Roberts.[1] Though he died in the middle of his visit to us, he lived long enough to take what has proved to be a last farewell of the Indian troops amongst whom he began his career sixty years ago, and with whom so much of his life has been associated. Moreover, it is felt that he has met the end he would have wished, on active service as a soldier. At an age when he might well have claimed a rest, he has set a glorious example of patriotism, remaining in harness and carrying on the work to which he had devoted his life by coming out to greet those fighting for their country on the great day of trial—that day whose arrival he had so clearly foreseen and for which he had so earnestly striven to prepare the nation.

[1] [See *Military*, I, p. 94]

November 16-19

Once more there is no change to record in the military situation on our front. With the exception of an attack in force, again upon our left, on the 17th, the four days from the

16th to the 19th have been unusually uneventful. The great change that has occurred has been in the weather, for winter has now set in in earnest. A miserable afternoon of snow and slush has been succeeded by a night of frost, and this morning is keen, calm, and bright, and promises well for the airmen, who have recently been so much hampered in their work.

In regard to the exact situation at Ypres, since certain misstatements to the effect that the Germans had penetrated the town and been driven out again have apparently been circulated, it may be as well to state that Ypres is in the hands of the Allies, and that, save for prisoners of war, or possibly spies, no Germans have succeeded in entering the town or even getting near entering it. The Allied position there is stronger than it has ever been.

On Monday, the 16th, our troops on the left passed the most peaceful day they have experienced during the last month. There was little shelling, and no infantry attacks were made. A prisoner asserted that it had been the intention of the Germans to assault in this quarter on the 15th, but that the damage inflicted by our artillery on the previous day had been so heavy that it had been decided to postpone the operation until reinforcements should arrive. There is no doubt that on the 19th, in massing preparatory to the attack, the Germans had committed certain faults and so given a good opportunity for our guns and Maxims, which was at once seized, with devastating results to the rear battalions.

The fighting to the south of Ypres continued without any marked advantage to either side, but the French everywhere held their ground; on our centre all was quiet; and on our right the enemy continued to show some activity in pushing forward saps and throwing bombs from their trench-mortars. One of their sap-heads was successfully attacked during the night, and an earth-boring tool was captured.

On Tuesday nothing particular occurred along our line except, as has been stated, on the left, where the Germans made yet another effort in the direction of Ypres. After shelling our positions to the east and south-east they made three attacks. About 1 P.M. their infantry advanced in strength against our section of this line and took possession

of some trenches out of which our troops had been driven by shell fire. When they endeavoured to press on, however, our infantry made a brilliant counter-attack with the bayonet and drove them out of the trenches and for some 500 yards beyond.

The second attempt was made farther to south-west, and was pressed to within five yards of our line before it was broken by our rifle fire. On this occasion the Germans advanced obliquely across our front again, and suffered very severely both from our rifle and gun fire. The number of killed left in front of a length of some 500 yards of our front is estimated at about 1200. This assault was made by regular troops, though not by the Guard. About 3 P.M. they massed for a third assault, but on being subjected to a hot shell fire they gave up the attempt. On the whole it was a most successful day for our arms.

Wednesday, the 18th, was another quiet day, and nothing occurred except shelling. On our right the enemy contented himself with sapping. It was stated that owing to the high tide the inundation was extending satisfactorily to the south-east of Dixmude.

Thursday, the 19th, was also uneventful. Our trench-mortars were used for the first time with good results.

The successful resistance we have up to the present made to all the efforts of the enemy has had a very encouraging effect; and in spite of the exhausting nature of the operations of the past month, our men show great enterprise in making local counter-attacks, in cutting off the enemy's patrols, and in similar 'affairs of outposts.'

Frequent allusion has been made to the losses of the enemy. Round Ypres we are continually finding fresh evidence of the slaughter inflicted. On the 15th one of our battalions upon advancing discovered a German trench manned by 17 corpses, while there were 49 more in a house close by. Next day a patrol discovered 60 dead in front of one trench and 50 opposite another. In fact, all the farms and cottages to our front are charnel-houses. The significance of such small numbers lies only in the fact that they represent the killed in a very small area. According to prisoners, the German attempts to take Ypres have proved costly. One man stated that there were only 15 survivors out of his

platoon, which went into action 50 strong; another reported that of 250 men who advanced with him only 19 returned.

It is believed that one Bavarian regiment 3000 strong, which left Bavaria for the front on October 19, had only 1200 men left before the attack made along the Menin-Ypres Road on November 14, in which it again suffered severely. The plight of some of the units of the new formations is even worse, one regiment of the 23rd Reserve Corps having but 600 men out of 3000. If the period since the beginning of the war is considered, the numbers are greater. For instance, of the 15th Corps, one regiment had lost 60 officers and 2560 men, and another had lost 3000 men. These figures include casualties of every kind—killed, wounded, missing.

On all four days the weather has been bad. Generally fine and frosty in the early morning, it has turned to rain as the day has worn on. On Thursday there was a variation, and snow started to fall about 1 P.M. and continued till about six o'clock. It fell in large soft flakes, and covered the ground to a depth of perhaps nearly two inches, but melted under foot. The state of the roads, already bad, was rendered worse, while the condition of the trenches became wretched beyond description. From having to sit or stand in a mixture of straw and liquid mud, the men had to contend with half-frozen slush. 'It is an ill wind,' however, and the one good point about the wet weather of the last few days is that it has made the ground so soft that the enemy's howitzer shell sink for some depth before they detonate and expend a great part of their energy in an upward direction, throwing mud about.

Nevertheless, the wet and cold has added greatly to the hardships of the troops in the trenches; and the problem of how to enable them to keep their feet reasonably dry and warm is now engaging serious attention. At one place, owing to the kindness of the proprietor, certain works have recently been placed at our disposal as a wholesale bath-house, lavatory, and repair shop. In the works are a number of vats large enough to contain several men at one time, and they serve most excellently for the provision of hot baths for the men on relief from the trenches. Whilst they are enjoying a bath their clothes are taken away. The underclothing is washed or burnt and replaced by a new set, whilst the uniform is fumigated, cleaned, and repaired, and buttons

are sewn on and repairs done by a gang of women who are employed for the purpose. At this installation some 1500 men are catered for every day.

What this rehabilitation really means to the soldiers can alone be appreciated from a realisation of their previous state. It must be remembered that they have not only not bathed for weeks, they have not even been able to take off their clothes, and consequently in many cases officers as well as men are verminous. As the latter troop up to the bath they are, to say the least of it, unprepossessing in appearance. Weary, unshorn, and haggard, they are coated with mud, a good deal of which has crusted on them, and some are splashed with the blood of their comrades or of the enemy. When they come out clean, refreshed, and reclothed, they are different beings. And not only is this a good thing from the point of view of the happiness and comfort of the individual; it is a distinct gain in his fighting value and an asset to the force to which he belongs.

Nevertheless, bodily the men are in good condition. Food in abundance has reached them regularly, except in a few cases such as are incidental to trench warfare.

The following is a collection of extracts from the diaries of German soldiers. Except the last two, they have no special bearing on the present phase of the operations, for they refer to a period which has now passed; but they throw some light on the different aspects of the actual fighting, and may, therefore, be of interest to those who have no first-hand experience. They throw light, also, upon the psychological side of warfare and upon the manner in which their experiences affect the more impressionable of the men engaged. In this connection the effect produced by shell fire on the minds of the writers is somewhat remarkable, though their estimates of the losses suffered may be over the mark. Those of us in the field are sufficiently uncharitable to derive comfort from any revelation of the success of our operations, whether it be in the nature of the actual damage inflicted, or of the depression caused thereby.

From the Diary of a Man of the 9th Jäger Battalion

'We got our (? machine) guns into position, but did not fire, as we were informed that it was our 114th Infantry Regiment that was

shooting at us. It was only by sounding the *Wacht am Rhein* that we were able to bring the fellows to their senses.

'The enemy's artillery fire was now directed more to the left. Our regiment began to retire. How the shells followed us! One exploded three yards from our gun-carriage, and showered earth all over us, but did no further damage. Another dropped just in front and wounded two men mortally, and then a third exploded twenty yards ahead, right in the middle of a column, killing twelve men outright. A horrible sight! We were retiring on the village of St. Pol. Luckily the enemy's fire did not follow us here, for there would certainly have been a panic. One company leader, Lieutenant Fuchs, was killed by a piece of shell, and our Captain is now the only officer we have left.

'On this day our position was literally plastered by the heavy French naval guns. One projectile fell in a trench, killing nine men and wounding several others severely. Another fell in a trench of the 10th Company with the same deadly effect. An enormous shell exploded near the 11th Company trench, destroying fifteen yards of it and burying some twelve men. One of the howitzer batteries of the 30th Artillery Regiment suffered very severely. Two of its guns were hit and broken up. At the end of the day we all felt very bad.'

. . . . . .

'The 142nd Regiment, lying to the right of us, suffered very much and had to keep on withdrawing, as shell after shell was falling right in its trenches, and the men were absolutely exhausted. When shells are dropping in front, behind, to the right, and to the left, to remain in suspense continually in expectation of death or injury without being able to make any resistance, and to hear the screams of wounded who cannot be attended to in the narrow trenches, is a sensation which can be appreciated only by those who have experienced it.'

From a Letter of a Gunner of the Field Artillery
No. 11

21/10/14.

'On the 26th September a French aviator dropped a bomb on Cambrai, killing four Landwehr men and tearing off the arm of the Paymaster. On the 29th we were again sent to Verdun, south of Arlon. . . . On the 4th October in Mons, thence to Lille. On the 8th October our 2nd Battery suffered heavy losses at Dulle (?), losing seven men and nineteen horses. On the 11th we did not come into action, but took twenty prisoners.'

From a Letter of a Man of the 9th Jäger Battalion

21/10/14.

'We reached Peronne on the 27th September. We were then ordered to march on Combre (?) in the Amiens District. We were

attached to the Cavalry Division, to support it, and also to cover the flank of the Guard Division.

'On the 5th October we reached Lens, and on the 7th took up a position at Jeuer. The enemy shelled us so heavily all day that Lieutenant B. gave the order to retire at 4 P.M., and we lost touch of the other companies. We retreated under terrible rifle and shell fire, and had hardly arrived under cover when our captain drove us out again to our old position. The fire was so heavy on our return that I was surprised that we got there at all; it was so terrible that one could imagine hell had opened up and was pouring fire out of a thousand craters. I spent the most terrible hours of my life that day. The awful bombardment continued, our artillery not being able to give us any protection. At noon the next day we were forced to retire. This movement took place under still heavier artillery and machine-gun fire. How I survived is a wonder.'

From the Diary of a Bavarian Non-Commissioned Officer

'31/8/14.—We suffered terribly from the enemy's artillery. The village is in ruins and is like a slaughter-house; dead horses, bodies of men torn to bits, pools of blood—a picture of horror. The 5th G. Regiment is marching up to relieve us. This regiment has already been decimated in the fighting a day or two ago.

'The enemy directs a hellish shell fire against us and our artillery; one battery is destroyed, and ammunition wagon is on fire; wounded are crying out. Even the gravest trembles. My men tell their rosaries continually. Only One Above can help us.

'8/9/14.—Yesterday one of our sections was surprised by the enemy and almost annihilated. Only two men survive.

'8/10/14.—We are now near the town of Arras in the N.W. of France. I am now leader (as Sergeant) of my company, as all our officers have either been killed or wounded. We have suffered terrible losses during the last few days. Yesterday I was nearly killed, a bullet hitting my belt buckle.'

From a Letter of a Man of the 246th Reserve Regiment (27th Reserve Corps).

'On the 24th October we were ordered to be ready for an assault before dawn. We had hardly advanced five hundred yards when we were met by a terrific shell fire from the English. When we were collected again I found what an awful disaster had overtaken us. Of our battalion scarcely eighty men came through.'

(*Note.*—This apparently refers to one of the preliminary attacks in the neighbourhood of Ypres.)

From a Letter of a Man of the 242nd Reserve Regiment of the Same Corps

'The shooting of the English artillery is marvellous. They get the right range and direction every shot, and place each shell within a yard of the previous one. They must be wonderfully well informed of our movements. I don't know whether the intelligence is obtained by their aeroplanes, which are always hovering over us, or whether they have telephones behind our lines.'

November 20-22

As regards the progress on our immediate front affairs remain *in statu quo*, and there is no change to record except a climatic one, which has, in this quarter, really affected both sides more than any operations. The cold which set in on the 20th has continued without break. For three days the hard frost was accompanied by brilliant sunshine, but to-day, though the cold continues, the sky is clouded over. According to local authorities and gazetteers, the climate of the Pas de Calais is not subject to extremes of temperature, so it is to be hoped that the present severe weather, which is causing great hardship to the troops, in spite of the welcome sunshine, may prove to be only a cold 'snap.'

It is true that since the snow has frozen hard the men in the firing line are no longer suffering the misery of living in mud and slush, which culminated on the evening of the 19th, but it is almost impossible for them to keep warm at night in the open trenches. To give some idea of what life means under such conditions, it may be mentioned that many men are so stiff that they have to be lifted out on relief, and that some have been admitted to hospital suffering from frost-bite. Beyond the hardship inflicted on individuals, the change in the weather has chiefly affected aerial reconnaissance and the question of transport.

The former has been much facilitated in two ways. In the bright sunlight and through the clear atmosphere the whole landscape is very clearly visible even from the height at which our aviators are forced to fly by the hostile anti-aircraft guns, while against the white background of snow, entrenchments, roads, transports, rolling stock, and troops show up most distinctly. On the other hand, the present cold experienced at high altitudes, intensified by the speed at

which the aeroplanes travel through the air, greatly increases the rigour of the work. In spite of the employment of every device for retaining warmth, both pilots and observers have on some recent occasions returned so numb that they have had to be lifted from their machines.

The difficulty of transport and communication has to some extent been reduced by the cold, for as the coating of ice has been worn off or ground up the *pavé* has become far less slippery than it was when damp and greasy, while for the heavy motor-lorries the frozen ground on the sides of the roads is naturally better than a foot of slippery mud.

To turn to the operations : the 20th, 21st, and 22nd have been as uneventful as the preceding three days. To avoid any misconception, however, it must be explained that the use of this adjective is entirely comparative. What is now considered as uneventful is not so in the peace sense of the word. It merely signifies that no active operation of any special vigour by either side has stood out from the background of artillery bombardment. This continues day and night with varying intensity, hardly ever ceasing altogether, and includes fire from the 42 cm. howitzers—one of which is believed to be in use against our left—down to that of the anti-aircraft spitfires. It implies, also, that hundreds of shells are bursting and detonating along the length of each line, and that men are continually being killed and wounded. And yet, comparatively, even from so small a standpoint of the whole war as that of the British Army alone, uneventful is the only word to apply to such days—days on which scores of lives are being lost.

Friday, the 20th, passed absolutely without any occurrence of special importance. By that time our line had been so much strengthened owing to the arrival of reinforcements as to make it possible for the men in the trenches to be relieved regularly and frequently, and thus to gain the rest they require. It was found that the difficulty of patrolling had been much increased by the snow, the men's figures showing up so clearly against the white background.

In the centre our enemy employed a ' silent ' gun, which may be pneumatic or worked by some mechanical contrivance. Its chief points appear to be that there is no report of discharge, that the projectile travels through the air without

any such warning sound as that made by ordinary shell, and that the first notice received of its arrival is its detonation. So far this weapon has done no damage. On our right centre our artillery made some good practice, especially in the neighbourhood of Neuve Chapelle, where it rendered some of the German trenches untenable. During the day much valuable information was obtained from aerial reconnaissance.

Saturday, the 21st, was of a similar nature to Friday. On our left there was no activity. In the left centre the opposing trenches were at some points not more than 25 to 40 yards apart. In this quarter good effects were being produced by the use of rifle grenades; the shrapnel was found an efficacious means of curbing the German snipers, who were very enterprising. On the right centre the German airmen were active and dropped a bomb on Bailleul. This has no more useful effect in helping on their operations than most of the other similar exploits of their airmen, for the bomb dropped on the hospital. Being fitted with a sensitive fuse, which acted on impact with the roof, it detonated midway through the ward just below before reaching the floor. Luckily the ward had just been vacated by forty patients, but one wounded man who had been left behind was again wounded. Every window within a large radius of the explosion was shattered. On our right a German aeroplane was forced to descend in our lines after an action in the air with one of our machines, and the observing officer and the pilot were made prisoners. They were found to be furnished with proclamations printed in Hindi recommending the native troops to desert.

Sunday, the 22nd, was unusually quiet, and more like the Day of Rest than it has been for some time. On our left sniping was again countered by the use of shrapnel. Two more German aeroplanes were brought down, one was chased by one of our machines for some distance, during which a running fight was kept up, in which our aviator was slightly wounded in the hand. It then came down in our lines. When they landed the German observer and pilot appeared to be much surprised and disgusted to discover where they had descended. The officer who succeeded in forcing down this hostile machine had previously flown over Lille, where he had dropped several bombs on the aerodrome. The other aeroplane was also chased and forced to descend, but managed

to do so inside the German lines. On our right a short section of one trench held by the Indian Corps was blown in by bombs from a trench-mortar and had to be abandoned. But, more than counterbalancing this, our heavy guns scored direct hits on two of the German batteries.

Some of the roads behind the enemy's front line in one quarter have, it is believed, become impassable owing partly to the weather conditions existing before the recent drop in temperature and also to the attentions of the Allied artillery. It is possible to render roads impracticable by long-range fire from heavy guns, either by shelling any object that attempts to pass, or by merely dropping shell on the road itself. A combination of craters—such as are made by large calibre high-explosive shell—and a sea of deep mud forms an obstacle difficult of negotiation by motor transport.

Many reports have come in of the excellent results recently achieved by our artillery, especially in repelling the attacks on Ypres, in which quarter of the field our artillery officers say they have had such targets as gunners dream of but seldom see. On one occasion, in order to support our infantry in a counter-attack, one of our guns was brought up to within 500 yards of the enemy, and succeeded almost immediately in getting a direct hit on a German gun, silencing it, and killing several of the infantry at the same time. In another part of the field our trench-mortars have been effective in throwing bombs into the enemy's works.

In the kind of warfare now being waged, which is in many cases conducted at very close quarters, the opposing lines being often not so much as 40 yards apart, the strangest situations occasionally arise. Our men and the enemy converse—for many of the Germans understand English—hold shooting competitions, and throw packets of tobacco to one another. These positions in close proximity to the enemy are not unwelcome to our men, for then they are at any rate secure from shell fire, the hostile artillery being unable to shoot at them for fear of hitting its own infantry. Indeed, for either side a trench close to the enemy is often a safer spot than any other in the fighting zone.

[1] [See *Naval*, 2, p. 208]

The news of the destruction of the *Emden*[1] naturally caused immense satisfaction amongst all ranks; and at one place where the opposing trenches were especially close together it

was greeted with cheers and at once thoughtfully passed on with comments to the enemy. The result was that our trench was fired at heavily for some time. The reaction produced in France by a British success in the Indian Ocean may interest some of those who took part in the naval action.

It is reported that a certain Landwehr brigade, one of whose mail-bags has recently been found in front of a German trench, is now fighting on the Russian frontier.

November 23-25

Again there is no change to be reported in the military situation. The break in the weather foreshadowed by the cloudy sky of the 22nd has now arrived, and since the 23rd a thaw has set in. It is consequently again wet underfoot, though the weather has been fine. The narrative for the three days, November 23-25, is as follows :—

On Monday, the 23rd, interest centred on the south of the Lys, where the Germans resumed their activity in the neighbourhood of Festubert. In the morning, having sapped towards a certain section of our position and bombarded it with trench-mortars, they advanced and succeeded in capturing some of our trenches by a rush. Two counter-attacks were delivered by us in the afternoon, but were stopped by bombs and machine-gun fire.

During the night, however, the enemy was gradually driven from the positions he had captured, losing over 100 killed and 100 prisoners, including three officers. Three machine-guns and a trench-mortar were also taken. This counter-attack was carried out in the face of heavy fire from machine-guns, our British and Indian troops storming the trenches on both flanks, and then clearing them by working inwards. The Gurkhas did considerable execution at close quarters with their *kukris*, even penetrating into some of the German trenches, while a grenade party, led by an officer of the Royal Engineers, co-operated with great effect. Our casualties were numerous, as is natural in fighting at such close quarters, but they were not so heavy as those of the enemy.

During the German attack on the 23rd, a British officer in charge of a trench in a position of some tactical importance

received an urgent telephone message instructing him to hold on at all costs. His reply was to the effect that he had never had any intention of doing anything else, and that he would be obliged if he could be informed when his men's rations would be sent up.

On this night a minor success was gained a few miles farther north by a small party belonging to one of our battalions. After the officer in command had shot the German sentry, our men, by rapid fire, cleared three of the enemy's advanced trenches without sustaining any casualties. Our guns then interposed to keep down the fire from other trenches as our men retired. On the rest of our line nothing of interest occurred; the bombardment continued to slacken, being replaced to a great extent by sniping on both sides.

During this war the cavalry have had to play many rôles, varying from charging with the bayonet to sapping and even mining, but November 23 furnished a fresh experience even for them, a brigade being moved by motors, since the road was too slippery for horses.

Tuesday, the 24th, was absolutely uneventful. One of our Territorial battalions proved themselves already adepts at sniping by accounting for seven Germans with a loss of one man to themselves. On our right there was much bomb-throwing on both sides, but the enemy showed no inclination to press on. That night, in the centre of our line, an officer accompanied by some sappers and an infantry escort went out in order to mine a farm from which there had been sniping. Under fire from the German trenches they laid the charge and retired. A party of the enemy went into the farm, found the fuse, and cut it.

There was, however, another means of firing the charge, which, unluckily for them, they did not discover, and the building and its occupants were blown up.

Wednesday, the 25th, was a comparatively warm day, which, after the cold of the last few nights, came as a great relief to the men in the trenches. All was quiet along our line except on the left, where both sides continued to shell one another's positions. In the centre our troops have contrived to make it extremely unpleasant for the Germans who gained a foothold on the edge of Ploegsteert Wood some weeks ago. Their position is subjected to a cross fire from all direc-

tions, which during the last two days alone has accounted for nineteen men. Indeed, since the enemy desisted from his attacks in force, the fighting has resolved itself into a competition in sniping and small affairs of outposts all along the line, contested with rifle, hand-grenades, bombs from mortars, and mines.

Our aeroplanes have been especially active in offence during the last few days, having dropped 123 bombs on various targets which need not be specified. One of our heavy howitzers, also, registered a direct hit on a railway station.

Every effort is being made to mitigate the hardships incidental to campaigning in winter. The trenches themselves are heated by braziers and stoves and floored with straw, bricks, and boards. Behind them are shelters and dug-outs of every description, most ingeniously contrived so as to give some degree of comfort and facilities for cooking. The men are being provided with skin-coats in addition to their great-coats.

There is remarkably little sickness, which fact is due no doubt to the ample quantity and excellent quality of food, but there have been several cases of frost-bite in the feet. Hot baths are being arranged for the men when their turn of duty is over. The arrangements for bathing made at one place already described have now been elaborated, and after bathing a man can rest, drink a cup of coffee, and smoke a cigarette.

The account already given of the repulse of the attack by the Prussian Guard on November 11 was necessarily brief, and no reference was made to the prominent, and, indeed, decisive part played by the artillery. After the enemy had broken through our front line, the situation became most serious, for there were only two field companies of Royal Engineers available at the moment as a reserve in this quarter of the field. On the right front of the German attack, firing through open spaces between the woods, were a heavy battery and a field battery, which dealt havoc amongst the attackers both before and after they reached our line. But the Germans continued to come on almost up to the guns, some bodies being picked up at a distance of only 70 yards from them.

Realising that all might be lost unless a firing line of some

kind could be established, the battery officers managed to form a line of gunners, regimental cooks, and details of various descriptions. These men stood firm, kept up a steady rifle fire, and checked the assault at a most critical moment, thus enabling other troops to come up to repel it more completely. At another point five Sapper cooks attacked a house containing some Germans who were sniping a French battery at short range. They drove an equal number of Germans from the house, capturing three of them.

One of our artillery officers, who was observing for his battery from a building near the firing line, found himself completely cut off and in rear of the Germans who had gained our advanced trenches. Not at all perturbed, however, by the strangeness of his situation, and recognising that a turn of affairs had given him a unique opportunity, he continued for two whole days to direct the fire of the guns by telephone, subsequently rejoining our troops by night.

Another officer of the same regiment who was employed on a similar duty also had a strange experience. Stationed in one of our advanced trenches, he was engulfed in the wave of Germans who suddenly appeared from the mist and pressed on past the trench in which he was ensconced. He then found himself stranded high and dry between the two advancing masses of the enemy. Running down the rear of the front column, he succeeded in the fog in escaping to the flank without being noticed.

It speaks wonders for German discipline that their officers should be able to get so much out of their men, but an incident which occurred recently in front of one of our battalions shows that the demands made are sometimes beyond the limit of human endurance. The Germans were holding the edge of a wood, and in order to attack our trenches had to advance across an open space of some 200 yards. After much shouting and cries of '*Vorwärts*' the first assault was delivered. It was repelled, and the enemy retired to the shelter of the wood. The assault was repeated a second and then a third time, being on each occasion preluded by louder exhortations. Once again did our listening men hear shouts of '*Vorwärts*'; but on this occasion these were greeted with loud exclamations of '*Nein*,' '*Nein*,' and no advance was made.

The way in which our troops have been supplied is ad-

mittedly one of the features of the campaign. In fact it is probably not saying too much to state that no soldiers in the field have ever been so well fed as are ours to-day. Full credit for this must be given to the branch of the British Army concerned, but at the same time it must be recognised that its efforts would have been in vain except for the whole-hearted co-operation and assistance of the French railway authorities. The railway system has worked without a hitch, and in carrying out a complicated transport task which has developed in a direction which could not exactly have been foreseen, has proved to what an extent of elastic efficiency the organisation has been brought by preparation and practice in peace manœuvres. Amidst all its multifarious duties in supplying the French troops spread over an arc of some 350 miles, it has never once failed in the additional duty of acting as a line of communication for the British Army.

Retrospect—October and November

As was said in the last narrative, there has recently been a lull in active operations. No progress has been made by either side in our sphere of action, and no change has occurred in the situation of the British relative to the enemy. Yet there has come about an important modification in the scope of the part played by our army as a whole. This modification, comprising a readjustment of our forces, has been maturing for some time, and has now been completed. It can therefore be referred to in some detail in the course of a brief general review of the development of the situation of the Expeditionary Force during the past six weeks.

When that force was transferred northwards from the Aisne to the neighbourhood of the Belgian frontier during the first days of October, its task was to prolong the left flank of the French and to prosecute farther north the action which they had been so gallantly carrying on for a month on our left, from Soissons up to the north of Arras, and also to join hands with the French and Belgian forces on the coast. Incidentally, in attempting this, it was compelled to assume responsibility for a very extended section of front. That this was so was due to the exigencies of the moment and to the numerical inadequacy of the British Army for the part it was forced to play by the course taken by the war.

It is necessary to point out that in any appreciation of the rôle played by our forces in the past, being played in the present, or to be played in the future, sight must never be lost of the fact that they are not waging this war single-handed, and that their deeds, important as they naturally must appear to us, represent but a small fraction of the joint action of the Allies in the western theatre of war. Geographically the extent of front for which the British were responsible during October was in length less than one-twelfth of the immense line, from Switzerland on the right to the English Channel on the left, held by the Allies. This being so, it is obvious that by far the greater share of the common task of opposing the enemy—a share which they have splendidly performed—has fallen and still falls to the French, while the Belgians have played an important, almost vital, part.

This extended front having been taken up by our Army, what happened ? As has already been pointed out, the action on its part at first, up to October 20, was preparatory in nature, the British advancing in an attempt to turn the German right, and the Germans fighting delaying actions in order to gain time for reinforcements to come up. From the moment that Antwerp fell—on October 9—the Germans made every effort to push forward the besieging forces released towards the west, and to follow up the Belgian Field Army and the British detachment landed on the coast. They also hastened to bring up from various parts of Germany certain new army corps which had been hastily raised and trained after the commencement of the war. Their object was first to reinforce their comparatively weak right wing north of La Bassée, which was being gradually pushed back by the enveloping British, and then, pivoted on that place, which was still in their hands, to assume the offensive in strength, drive the Allies out of Belgium, and break through to Dunkirk and Calais.

Of their new formations four corps reached the zone of operations comprised in the stretch of country from Lille to the sea between October 15 and 21 ; and these, with the troops which had been set free from Antwerp, together made up a force of some 250,000 fresh men. Other corps were also concentrated from different parts of the front, and eventually the Germans had, north of La Bassée, about

fourteen corps and eight cavalry divisions, that is, a force of three-quarters of a million men with which to attempt to drive the Allies into the sea. In addition, and this is most important, there was the immensely powerful armament of heavy siege artillery which had also been brought up from round Antwerp.

As is known, the first blow was delivered about October 17 along the coast, against our Allies round Nieuport and in the neighbourhood of Dixmude, both places being beyond the left of our line, which then had its flank slightly to the north-east of Ypres. From that time up to the 28th a series of desperate attempts were made against the French and Belgians holding the line of the Yser, who resisted with the utmost determination and entire success. Shortly after these attacks commenced, on October 20, the enemy began also to press at different points along our front; and from that day up to November 17, or for nearly a month, he continued to deliver a succession of furious blows, the most violent of which were directed against Ypres. At the commencement of this period the Allies were very greatly outnumbered, which fact enabled the Germans, in the execution of their offensive strategy, to mass greater strength than that possessed by the defence at any place selected for attack, or, in other words, at the place which for the moment was regarded as the decisive point.

To turn to the action of the British Army round Ypres: for practically a month it succeeded in holding its ground against those repeated onslaughts made by vastly superior forces. The action during this period can be divided into two phases, one lasting from October 20, when the Germans first assumed the offensive against us definitely, to November 2, and the other from the 3rd to the 17th of that month. Before these two phases are considered, however, it will be as well to define briefly in what manner the portion of the line most concerned, *i.e.* that near Ypres, was held, so that some idea may be gained of the course of the operations in connection with locality. At first, when the German offensive started, the British held part of the re-entrant in the line to the north of the Ypres salient, the salient to the east of the town, and the re-entrant to the south of it. The German attacks in this quarter were of a double nature. Against the northern and southern re-entrants their immediate object

was to cut off the defenders of the Ypres salient. Against the east of the salient, from the direction of Menin, their efforts were directed to drive the defenders straight westwards through the town.

During the first phase, from October 21 to 23, occurred the unsuccessful attack of the German 23rd Corps against us in the neighbourhood of Bixschoote and that of the 27th Corps from the neighbourhood of Becelaere against the British on the north of the Menin Road, both of these corps being new formations. After these attacks the French relieved us of part of the front on the northern re-entrant. This phase culminated in the five days' desperate fighting on the east of Ypres, which lasted from October 29 till November 2, when the Germans attempted to capture the town by a direct blow westwards and penetration through the southern re-entrant.

This operation, as has previously been described, was their great effort, heralded by numerous orders inciting the troops to do their utmost, preluded and supported by an intense concentrated artillery fire, and encouraged by the presence of the Emperor. The attack was made by five corps in all, and when first its full fury fell on us we were still holding a very extended front, in spite of the fact that the French had relieved us of a portion of it to the north and were co-operating most gallantly in the defence.

During this time our force—which consisted all along of the same units, be it noted—had to withstand an almost continuous bombardment and to meet one desperate assault after another, each carried out by fresh units drawn from the large number which the Germans were devoting to the operation.

On the 30th the French came to our assistance and took over a portion of our front on the southern re-entrant, thus relieving the pressure considerably; and on the succeeding days a continuous stream of French reinforcements arrived in this quarter and in the north of Ypres. Never was help more welcome, for by then our small local reserves had again and again been thrown into the fight in the execution of repeated counter-attacks, and our men were exhausted by incessant fighting.

It is an interesting fact that this timely relief should have been afforded us by our Allies within a few days of the sixtieth

anniversary of that other occasion—at the Battle of Inkerman—when the British Army welcomed a French force advancing to its assistance.

During the second phase in the struggle there was a renewal of the attacks, marked by the special effort made by the Prussian Guard on the 11th directly westwards against the salient, and that made by the 15th Corps on November 17 to force its way in by the southern re-entrant. The results of those attempts are known. On November 20 the thin khaki line in this quarter was finally relieved by the French, and our weary men vacated the battered trenches they had so gallantly held for a month.

This, then, is the modification of the rôle now being played by the British Army; its front has been considerably shortened by the extent taken over by the French, and has, in addition, been reinforced. The lull in activity of about a week in the operations also has enabled us to readjust our forces, strengthen their position, and to bring up reserves. There has, therefore, been a great general improvement in the conditions under which we are carrying on the fight: and the time has arrived when it becomes possible—for the first time—without danger of giving away information that might enlighten and encourage the enemy, to refer to what our troops have done in one quarter of the small portion of the whole battle line which they have been holding, and to explain broadly why the stand made by them during the month after October 20, 1914, forms one of the most glorious chapters in our military history. Special attention is drawn to this quarter of our front because it was that most highly tried.

It may be that the story of that month will never be fully told. Many of those who could have supplied essential details are dead, and the nature of the fighting was such as to preclude any chance of careful records being kept. But it can be said that the dogged pluck of the troops and the individual acts of gallantry and devotion on the part of regimental officers and men again and again retrieved a situation that was at times critical; and that it has been due solely to their resource, initiative, and endurance that success has lain with us.

As the struggle swayed backwards and forwards through

wood and hamlet, the fighting assumed a most confused and desperate character. Units became inextricably mixed, and in many cases, in order to strengthen some threatened point or fill a gap in the line, officers had to collect and throw into the fight what men they could, regardless of the units to which they belonged. In one trench a subaltern was perhaps in charge of a detachment composed of Scotch, Irish, and English regiments. Here, a brigadier commanded a few companies. There, another has been in control of a division. One officer of that rank at one time had thirteen battalions under his command, which were much below strength owing to casualties and the disintegration inseparable from hand-to-hand fighting. Our casualties have been severe, but we have been fighting a battle, and a battle implies casualties. And heavy as they have been, it must be remembered that they have not been suffered in vain. The duty of the French, Belgians, and British in the western theatre of operations has been to act as a containing force, in other words, to hold on and to keep occupied as many of the enemy as possible whilst the Russians were attacking in the east. In this we have succeeded in playing our part, and by our resistance have contributed materially towards the success of the campaign.

Moreover, our losses have not impaired our fighting efficiency. The troops have required only a slight respite in order to be able to continue the action with as much determination as ever. They are physically fit and well fed, and have suffered merely from the fatigue inseparable from a protracted struggle such as they have been through. The severest handling by the enemy has never had more than a temporary effect on their spirits, which have soon recovered owing to the years of discipline and training to which officers and men have been accustomed.

The value of such preparation is as noticeable on the side of the enemy as on our own. The phenomenal losses suffered by the German new formations have been remarked, and they were in part due to their lack of training. Moreover, though at the first onset these formations advanced to the attack as bravely as their active corps, they have not by any means shown the same recuperative power. The 27th Corps, for instance, which is a new formation, composed

principally of men with only from seven to twelve weeks' training, has not yet recovered from its first encounter with British infantry round Becelaere, to the north-east of Ypres, a month ago. On the other hand, the Guard Corps, in spite of having suffered severely in Belgium, of having been thrown headlong across the Oise at Guise, and of having lost large numbers on the plains of Champagne and on the banks of the Aisne, advanced against Ypres on November 11 as bravely as they did on August 20.

It is well that the services of those who lie dead on the slopes and in the woods along the Franco-Belgian frontier should be realised, even though the realisation of their performances must at present of necessity be imperfect. Theirs it has been to defend against tremendous odds a line that could only be maintained if they were prepared to undergo great sacrifices.

The fact that the situation has now been relieved is no reason for assuming that the enemy has abandoned his intention to press through to the sea; and the same task lies before the British Army of maintaining its share in the struggle until the nation in arms shall come to our support. The price already paid has been, and will doubtless be, great, but it will be paid ungrudgingly, in the certainty that help will come before long.

What the Army has done cannot be better expressed than in the concluding words of a Special Order recently issued by the Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief :—

'I have made many calls upon you, and the answers you have made to them have covered you, your regiments, and the Army to which you belong with honour and glory.

'Your fighting qualities, courage, and endurance have been subjected to the most trying and severe tests, and you have proved yourselves worthy descendants of the British soldiers of the past who have built up the magnificent traditions of the regiments to which you belong.

'You have not only maintained those traditions, but you have materially added to their lustre.

'It is impossible for me to find words in which to express my appreciation of the splendid services you have performed.'

The Germans are, indeed, no unworthy foes. In spite of the strain of conducting a gigantic struggle on two fronts,

they continue to attack with a courage which appears to be but little abated by failure. In this quarter they have not succeeded in gaining the Straits of Dover; but the new army which they put into the field in the middle of October has enabled them to consolidate their position on this frontier, and to retain all but a very small portion of Belgium, including an important stretch of coastline. Well as they have fought, however, it is doubtful if their achievements have been commensurate with their losses, which, as has been said, have recently been very largely due to the lack of training and comparative lack of discipline of the improvised units they have placed in the field. The qualification 'comparative' is employed advisedly, for owing to the discipline to which every German is subjected from childhood, that of their new formations is probably greater than any that could be instilled into Englishmen of a similar class in similar circumstances. Nevertheless, the prospect of their ultimate defeat, certain as it seems to us, does not appear even yet to have dawned on them, nor will it do so until further great efforts and further great sacrifices have been made by the Allies.

This war is going to be one of exhaustion; and after the regular armies of the belligerents have done their work it will be upon the measures taken to prepare and utilise the raw material of the manhood of the countries concerned that final success will depend. This implies trained men—hundreds of thousands of trained and disciplined men.

November 26-28

From the 26th to the 28th the weather has continued warm, and, except for an occasional heavy shower, has been fine. These three days have been productive of no incidents of any magnitude, and have, on the whole, been about the quietest we have experienced for weeks. The narrative of operations, therefore, can be dismissed in a very few words.

Though generally inactive along our front, the Germans have continued to press in one quarter—*i.e.* against the Indian troops, where, in spite of the loss suffered by them in their last attack in this direction, they have been busy extending their saps in order to carry out assaults from short distances. None of these however, has been carried out in

great force. South of the Lys generally there has been some shelling of localities in the rear of our front line; but this form of annoyance diminishes daily along our whole front. Sniping is carried on almost incessantly. There seems little doubt that the Germans are employing civilians, either willing or unwilling, to dig trenches, for some have been seen and shot while engaged in this work.

On Thursday, the 26th, there is nothing to record.

On the 27th the enemy succeeded by means of sapping up, and then assaulting from a short distance amidst a shower of bombs, in gaining possession of a portion of a trench on our right. From this, however, they were soon ejected.

On the 28th, facing our centre, there were signs of some change having been made in the composition of the hostile artillery, which was employed in 'registering' fresh zones of fire. On the right, one of the German batteries was discovered in the morning to have been left out in the open. This was probably due to the failure of an attempt to move it during the night. However, whatever the cause of its exposed position, our guns did not fail to take advantage of it. On the same day, though inactive against us, the Germans made an isolated and unsupported attack on the French on our left. They were easily beaten back, and, it is believed, lost some 400 killed and many prisoners.

While it is necessary to accept the evidence of all prisoners with caution, there is a change of tone in the views expressed by some of the officers recently captured which appears to be genuine. They admit the failure of German strategy, and profess to take a gloomy view of the future. At the same time, it must be confessed that there is as yet no sign that their view is that generally held by the enemy. Nor has there been any definite indication of a lack of morale amongst his troops.

During the last six weeks various mobilisation orders calling up different classes of men liable to service have been issued by the French Government. To the average Englishman, whom a life spent far removed from all that war implies is apt to render unimaginative, even the immediate effect of such orders is hard to conceive: and to him a journey, made shortly after their issue, along the highways of Northern France—or, for that matter, in any part of France—might

have come as somewhat of a revelation. From the middle of October onwards the roads have been thronged with men—literally thousands being met with in the course of a short motor journey—all trudging along towards the mobilisation centres, carrying their few clothes and necessaries in bags slung over their shoulders. Some have more, some less, but few are without the spare pair of boots which they apparently, and quite rightly, regard as the most necessary article of a soldier's outfit. 'The Emperor fights his campaigns with our legs and not with our muskets,' said the conscripts of Napoleon, and their descendants have evidently not forgotten the lesson. The strange procession includes a curious mixture of types. A considerable proportion consists of middle-aged men of good physique, broad-shouldered and sturdy, and of likely young men from the countryside, of a type to make excellent soldiers.

For some years, as is probably generally known, there have been no exemptions from military service in France. Educational standards and professions, such as those of the actor, lawyer, doctor, and artist, which were formerly excepted, are now so no longer. But, besides those who escaped in the past, many others have now been gathered in the net of service and have gone to swell the numbers of those who have recently been streaming along every road in France to answer to the call of their country.

The change that, within the last few days, has come over what may be termed the 'atmosphere' of the battlefield is marked. As regards noise, the cannonade has now decreased to such an extent that for hours on end nothing is heard but the infrequent boom of one of the Allies' heavy guns, the occasional rattle of machine-guns, and the intermittent 'pop'—for that word expresses the sound best—of the snipers on either side. And in certain quarters, where the combatants are close and operations appertain to those of siege warfare, the bombs of the *Minenwerfer*, and the smaller bombs thrown by hand, are detonating almost continuously. But the air no longer throbs to the continuously dull roar of heavy artillery and the detonating of great projectiles.

Of course, if an attack is in progress, there is again turmoil, but it is more local and does not approach in intensity that which recently reigned on a large scale. The scene as a whole,

as viewed from one of the few commanding points in our front, is almost one of peace as compared with that of a week or two ago. The columns of black smoke vomited by the exploding howitzer shell are as rare as those from burning villages. The only generally visible signs of war are the occasional puffs of bursting shrapnel opening out above woods and villages and floating slowly away on the still air.

It was mentioned in the account of the fighting on the Aisne that, so far as we were concerned, the struggle had to some extent assumed the character of siege operations. The same can be said with still greater truth of the battle in which we are now engaged. Both sides have had time to dig themselves in and to strengthen their positions with all the resources available in the field. In spite of this, the Germans, urged by weighty motives, limited as to time, and confident in their numerical superiority and the weight of a very powerful siege armament—such as has, indeed, never before been brought into the field—have, when face to face with the Allies' line, attempted to break it by frontal attacks. Having failed in this, in spite of desperate efforts, they are now endeavouring in some quarters to progress by the slower methods of siege warfare.

Until recently they have attempted to gain ground by assaulting our position across the open, seizing what they can out of it, retaining and strengthening that, and using it as a starting-point for a fresh assault. Their aim is still the same —to gain ground and drive us back—but, owing to the immense loss entailed in the summary method of assaulting across the open for any distance, the means employed are modified. To shorten the space over which their infantry has to advance, they now move forward by several narrow end-on approaches, which are either open to the air or a foot or two below the surface of the ground. Where open, these approaches are zigzagged to avoid being enfiladed. In either case forward progress is made by evacuating at one end. At what is considered a possible assaulting distance, these approaches, or saps, are joined up by a lateral trench roughly parallel to that being attacked. Here the stormers collect for a fresh rush.

The extent to which subterranean or semi-underground life is forced on the combatants in the neighbourhood of the

firing line varies with the nature of the ground, and depends on the character of the enemy's activity in the particular locality in which they are. Where sniping or rifle fire is alone to be expected, the amount of the excavations behind the front line is limited. When bombardment is, or has been, severe every one within range of the enemy's guns, the brigadier not excepted, will be found ensconced underground in 'dug-outs,' or 'funk-holes,' as they are familiarly called, for in the zone under fire houses are no better than shell traps.

Behind the firing-line trenches are found the shelters for the men holding the line and those for supports. These are more elaborate and comfortable than the fire trenches, usually are roofed over, and contain cooking-places and many conveniences. Some of these underground quarters have now become almost luxurious and contain windows. Communication between the firing line and the various shelters in rear and with the headquarters of units is kept up along approach trenches, all zigzagged to prevent being enfiladed, and liberally partitioned into compartments by traverses, so as to localise the effect of shell fire.

For some time the character of the artillery fire has been such as to force both combatants, even for some distance behind the firing line, to burrow into the earth in order to obtain shelter, and to conceal their works as far as possible in order to gain protection both from guns and aeroplanes.

This has been carried on to such an extent, that behind the front fire trenches of British, French, and Germans are perfect labyrinths of burrows of various types. The principal feature of the battlefield, therefore, as has been often pointed out, is the absence of any signs of human beings.

Where resort is had to siege methods the earthworks on both sides become still more complicated, though there is a definite system underlying their apparent confusion. It is not possible to give any details of the methods upon which our trenches are arranged, but it is permissible to describe how the enemy is carrying on the close attack at some points.

From the last position attained they sap forward in the two ways already mentioned. The approaches are excavated by pioneers working at the head, the German pioneers being technically trained troops which correspond to our sappers. Owing to the close range at which the fighting is conducted,

and the fact that rifles fixed in rests and machine-guns are kept permanently directed upon the crest of the trenches, observation is somewhat difficult; but the 'head' or end of the approaching sap can be detected from the mound of earth which is thrown up. This cannot be done, however, where the advance is being conducted by a 'blinded' sap. In executing this type of sap a horizontal bore-hole, about a foot in diameter and some three or four feet below ground, is bored by means of a special earth borer worked by hand. It is then enlarged by pick and shovel into a small tunnel, whose roof is one or two feet below the surface.

Several of these saps having been driven forward, their heads are connected by a lateral trench, which becomes the front line, and can be used for stormers to collect for an assault. In some cases, usually at night, a sap is driven right up to the parapet of the hostile trench, which is then blown in by a charge. Amidst the confusion caused, and a shower of grenades, the stormers attempt to burst in through the opening and work along the trench. They also assault it in front. As in their ordinary infantry attacks, machine-guns are quickly brought up to any point gained in order to repel counter-attacks.

Most of this fighting takes place at such close range that the guns of either side cannot fire at the enemy's infantry without great risk of hitting its own men. The rôle of artillery projectiles, however, is well played by bombs of all descriptions, which are used in prodigious quantities.

The larger ones projected by the *Minenwerfer*, of which the Germans employ three sizes, correspond to the heavy howitzer shell of the distant combat, and have much the same effect. They have a distinctive nickname of their own, but they may be termed the 'Jack Johnsons' of the close attack of siege warfare. The smaller bombs or grenades are thrown by hand from a few yards distance, perhaps just lobbed over a parapet. They are charged with high explosive and detonate with great violence; and since their impetus does not cause them to bury themselves in the earth before they detonate, their action, though local, is very unpleasant in the enclosed space between two traverses in a trench.

These grenades of various types are being thrown continuously by both sides, every assault being preluded and

accompanied by showers of them. In fact, the wholesale use of these murderous missiles is one of the most prominent features of the close attack now being carried on.

As may be imagined, what with sharpshooters, machine-guns and bombs, this kind of fighting is very deadly, and somewhat blind, owing to the difficulty of observation. The latter, however, is somewhat decreased by the use of the 'hyperscope,' which is much the same in principle as the periscope of a submarine, and allows a man to look over the top of a parapet without raising his head above it.

November 29–December 1

The uneventfulness of affairs on our front continues, as does the mild weather.

On Sunday, the 29th, the enemy in front of the right of our line kept up their efforts to throw bombs into our trenches.

On our left the French made progress both north and south of Ypres and captured some German trenches.

On Monday, the 30th, the Germans displayed a little more activity along our line, and on our extreme left, as well as south of the Lys, there was a decided increase of artillery fire. On the left two of their guns were caught in the open by our artillery as they were apparently changing position under cover of a rainstorm. One was knocked out and the other was abandoned. In this part of the field also occurred one of those strange incidents which are not uncommon in fighting at close quarters. An infantry officer who walked up to a German trench found all its occupants asleep. As a memento of his visit he carried off a bayonet.

In the centre we gained some minor local successes. A party of the enemy which had started to excavate a new trench within sight was immediately driven out by our artillery; a house used by their snipers was blown up; and a patrol from one of our Territorial battalions successfully rounded up a hostile patrol, making two prisoners. At other points along this part of the front the enemy has now begun to use rifle grenades freely. These incidents are of the most insignificant character, and have no bearing on the operations, but it is in a succession of such small actions that the periods of inactivity on a grand scale are passed.

Beyond our left the French again advanced slightly, and captured a German trench.

On Tuesday, December 1, there is nothing in the way of military operations to record.

It is reported, on what is believed to be good authority, that the Germans have renamed Ostend, and that the railway station is now placarded with the name 'Kales.' The only possible object of such a manœuvre, if it has indeed been carried out, would appear to be to encourage the soldiers who are brought from distant parts in absolute ignorance of what has really been happening. That this action is not so futile as it may seem is shown by the fact that many of our prisoners are still convinced that both Calais and Paris are in the hands of the Germans.

The course taken by the German operations round Ypres, ending in bombardment, has been such as to suggest that the destruction of the place is really the outcome of disappointment and exasperation at its resistance, and at the failure of the much-advertised plans for its capture.

Up till the end of October the town had not been bombarded as a whole, the shells which had fallen in it being obviously directed at points where our headquarters were believed to be situated, and at one or two others, such as the railway station, where destruction would have some military value. The shelling of the town itself only began in earnest on the night of November 5, since when it has been maintained intermittently. That the town escaped so long was apparently due to the fact that up till the 5th the Germans counted on capturing it and did not wish to cause damage. Hopes of doing so were no doubt still held after that date, as is evinced by the continuation of the attacks, notably that of the 11th by the Prussian Guard. But these later attempts to take the place seem rather to have been of the nature of 'forlorn hopes,' which called for all the assistance that could be obtained by artillery co-operation, even at the risk of the destruction of a historic place which might become German; and considerable advantage was certainly to be gained by concentrating fire on a place where roads met and which must be a focus of traffic.

On these military grounds the initial bombardment can to a certain extent be justified, though it is doubtful whether

the results achieved were commensurate with the expenditure of ammunition involved. And its object could have been attained equally well if the German artillery had concentrated on the points where the roads, of which there are not many, issue from the town, and it did not entail the employment of incendiary shell. But the subsequent conduct of the enemy denotes a desire for senseless destruction.

The last attack in force was delivered on November 17. Four days later, on the 22nd, the Germans commenced to pour a stream of shell into the central market square; and whereas the Cloth Hall and Cathedral had both escaped material damage up till then, these two historic buildings were blazing fiercely by 3 P.M. It is stated that in order to do this the Germans brought up a train armed with heavy guns, which were used under the direction of a captive balloon. The bombardment was continued until the evening of the 23rd. The reason to which is ascribed this wanton destruction has already been stated, but in case there should be any doubts as to the justice of the indictment, it must be stated that so soon as the Cloth Hall and the Cathedral had been obviously demolished, fire was no longer directed on those buildings. In the words of a French *communiqué*, which will also be the verdict of history: 'This magnificent old city was condemned to death on the day when the Emperor was forced to renounce the hope of making an entry into it.'

The recent connection of the British Army with the city is in reality an old one renewed. Ypres was one of the barrier fortresses against France, for the defence of which we were bound by the 'Barrier Treaty,' made in 1715, to provide garrisons amounting to 10,000 men. Almost two hundred years have passed since then, but the old ramparts are still there, looking down upon the French and British soldiers who have jointly maintained the proud title of the old fortress against another foe.

December 2-5

In the situation of the British Army no fresh development has occurred during the last four days. To the south of the Lys, Wednesday, December 2, passed quite uneventfully, though the enemy's artillery displayed more activity than it

has recently been showing, while to the north of the river we destroyed an observation station by our howitzer fire. On our right centre a successful reconnaissance was made at night.

Beyond our flanks, as has already been made public, on our right the French captured the Château of Vermelles and some trenches, while on our left they discovered that their field artillery had destroyed a German heavy gun and two ammunition wagons the day before.

On the next day there was a great deal of rain, but no incident along our whole front. It was found, however, that a minor expedition against a German sap-head made on the night of November 27-28 had been more successful than was realised at the time, having resulted in a loss of between forty and fifty to the enemy at an expense of thirteen casualties to us.

On Friday, the 4th, another German observation station in front of our right centre was destroyed by our guns. Otherwise nothing more than the usual artillery fire, sniping, and bomb throwing occurred, the latter more especially on our right. There was again much rain. Beyond our right the French made further progress at Vermelles, capturing a certain amount of war material, including a machine-gun and ammunition, and on our left they captured a village near Langemarck.

Saturday, the 5th, brought another week of the war to a close on a miserable day of almost continuous rain and high wind.

During these four days the most important event for the British Army has been the visit of His Majesty the King. His Majesty's stay at General Headquarters luckily coincided with a period of inactivity, which enabled far more of the troops at the front to welcome him than might otherwise have been the case.

Of major tactical operations by the British forces there has recently been an entire absence, and there has therefore been no definite progress to record of a material nature such as might be achieved by inflicting defeat and severe loss on the enemy. Nor for some seven weeks has any strategical advantage been won in the geographical sense, since there has been no advance nor gain of ground. But there is another kind of strategic progress, more imponderable, less direct, and less

obvious than the two mentioned—namely, that produced by the lapse of time—when time is working against one side—every day tends to make it stronger, and active resistance on its part tends to force the enemy to misapplication of force which might be employed to greater advantage elsewhere. In this direction, as has been so clearly pointed out by the Commander-in-Chief in his latest despatch, the stationary attitude of the army has not been sterile. Acting as the Allies are, every day passed has co-operated towards the desired result. This contributory strategy, as it may be termed, however useful though it is, is monotonous, unexciting, and bereft of incidents on a large enough scale to provide interesting reading. It does not, therefore, lend itself to description. All that can be done is to point out what is happening.

It is proverbial that Allies fall out. But it is also proverbial that the exception proves the rule, and if that be true, the rule has certainly been established during the four months' duration of this war. There could be no more cordial relations than those existing between the French and British, both in their official and social life. In all the towns, large or small, in which the British Army has been quartered the friendliness with which the inhabitants have received us is more than remarkable; and it would be difficult to say in how many French houses British officers and men have now been billeted, or how many have been converted into military offices. In many cases the houses are empty, save possibly for a caretaker, in others the owners and their families, or portions of their families, are still inhabiting one part of their homes, while the British are occupying another—usually, be it noted, the better part. And, at best—even in the absolute upheaval of life which occurs in an invaded country—this incursion of strangers of another race must be intensely inconvenient.

One reason for the cordiality, or possibly, the good-humoured resignation, with which our French hosts receive us is as they say with a smile, 'Nous préférons, Monsieur, que vous soyez ici que les Allemands.' This is the sentiment that is always at the back of their minds, and the nearer the place in which they live to the high-water mark of the German invasion, the more fervently is it expressed. Indeed, it is absolutely impossible for those in England to realise the feelings and fears of the people out here who have either once

had the loathed invader in occupation of their homes, even when the latter have done no special damage, or who live in some place which by the merest chance the Germans have not entered.

This is quite apart from those instances in which towns have been destroyed and the enemy has taken what he considered rigorous measures. Even in those hard cases where it is necessary to turn the inhabitants out of their houses in order to demolish them so as to clear a field of fire, the resignation and courtesy met with are astonishing. The reasons given for this drastic action are at once appreciated, and the usual comment made is, 'Ah, well! It is a small matter compared to the war.' Such is the temper and mental attitude of the majority towards the war and their British allies.

There is no doubt, also, that our troops have never forgotten, and have by the treatment they have received never been allowed to forget for a moment, that they are in a friendly and allied country; and they have returned courtesy and good feeling in kind. Indeed, it is somewhat of a revelation to see how freely our soldiers mix with the population, and how the members of both nationalities get on with the smallest knowledge of the other's language. And a very pleasing side of the joint operations of the Allies is the fact that there has never been any sort of friction between the troops. This appears all the more remarkable when it is remembered how many thousands of men have been thrown together, often in most trying circumstances, and that wine is the common drink of the country.

If it does nothing more, this war is bound to increase the mutual knowledge of, and respect for, each other of the French and British, and there is no doubt that it will leave a lasting and beneficial effect on the intercourse of the two nations. The same may be said of the relations between the Belgians and British; but their connection has been neither so extensive nor so prolonged.

It has been stated in some of the British papers that the Germans have taken Domremy-la-Pucelle. This report is entirely incorrect, for the Germans have never been near that place; and it is likely to cause pain and annoyance to our Allies, since Domremy-la-Pucelle was the birthplace of Joan of Arc, and is a point of national and religious interest.

December 6-9

For the 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th December the operations of the army have been of the same character as for the past three weeks.

The tale of minor events is as follows :—On Sunday, the 6th, on our right our howitzers obtained direct hits on two German gun emplacements, whilst other guns shelled some of the enemy's trenches with good effect. There are grounds for believing that in this portion of our front the activity of our infantry in sniping, backed up by the fire of our artillery and the ingenuity of the Sappers in devising new methods of causing annoyance, has rendered the enemy somewhat uneasy, the quiet of the nights being continually broken by spasmodic outbursts of musketry from the German trenches and the frequent firing of star shell. These precautionary outbursts, however, are perhaps not altogether unjustified, for Gurkhas are unpleasant enemies on dark nights, and in many places the trenches of the Indians and the Germans are only a few yards apart. In this quarter a bombardment of the German trenches was carried out during the day, but the effect is not known. In the centre one of our battalions took an opportunity of opening fire on a German working party and caused considerable loss. Evidence of spying on the part of civilians was obtained on this day. A man in plain clothes was observed in the hostile trenches pointing out our positions. A German aviator dropped six bombs on Hazebrouck with little effect.

Since it has been so frequently stated that our howitzers have obtained 'direct hits' on the enemy's gun emplacements, perhaps it is as well to explain what this means in terms of damage done to the enemy. In the most unfavourable case to us, it means that one of our shell charged with many pounds of lyddite and fitted with a percussion fuse has detonated on the parapet of an emplacement. The result would be that a number of the detachment might be killed or wounded, but that the gun would probably not be seriously damaged. In the most favourable case it would mean that the shell has detonated in the emplacement itself, or actually on the gun or its mounting. This would almost certainly imply the destruction of both gun and detachment.

On Monday, the 7th, there was very heavy rain. The Germans fired rifle grenades for the first time against the trenches in the centre of our line. Our artillery, however, soon put a stop to this innovation. On the right and left nothing occurred worthy of special notice.

On Tuesday two German field-guns were put out of action by our artillery. Our guns also set fire to a railway station and some rolling stock, and destroyed a chimney used by the enemy for observation. Otherwise nothing occurred. It rained during a part of the day.

On Wednesday, the 9th, the only item to record is that opposite the left of our line the enemy was heard to be cheering. This may have been due to the receipt of the German official version of the battle of Lodz. Over the low-lying ground it was very foggy in the evening.

The weather has been very wet and much warmer during the last four days. There has also been a high wind during most of this period, but our aviators have succeeded in making several valuable reconnaissances. In spite of the absence of serious active operations, considerable progress has been made in generally improving our situation. The number of communication trenches has been increased, the drainage and heating of fire and living trenches have been arranged, the organisation of the supply and transport services has been brought to a higher pitch of efficiency, and everything is being prepared to meet the winter campaign before us. As an instance of some of the refinements of active service to which we are being introduced, it may be mentioned that the men in certain front-line trenches have been regaling themselves by listening on the telephone to a gramophone concert eight miles away.

That knowledge is power, and that to be forewarned is to be forearmed, are matters of proverbial philosophy, and in no sphere of human activity do they apply with greater force than in the conduct of war. In a military sense knowledge implies almost entirely an accurate acquaintance with facts concerning the enemy; where he is, what strength he is in, what he is doing—in a word, all that confers the ability to gauge the hostile general's strength and weakness, and to divine his intentions and his power to carry them into effect. To a greater or less degree it forms the basis of all action taken.

Indeed, Wellington is reported to have said that he owed his success to the fact that he was always wondering what 'the other fellow was doing on the other side of the hill.'

Nearly all the knowledge of this nature required by a commander in the field can be included in the term 'intelligence'; and to its collection and analysis is devoted a special branch of the General Staff of an army.

There are various ways of acquiring intelligence which are universally practised. They are broadly—reconnaissance, whether it be by cavalry, infantry, or both, by motor cycle, or aircraft; the employment of spies, or, as they are more pleasantly called, 'agents'; and the collection of such information as can be gained from an inspection of the uniforms worn by the dead or by prisoners, and from the papers carried by, or the cross-examination of, the latter. In these methods there is a certain amount of overlapping, but this does not entail such a waste of time and energy as might appear, for it is only by some overlap that can be obtained that corroboration of isolated pieces of information which enables decisions to be made and action to be taken with some reasonable chance of success. All methods, however, whether positively or negatively, by direct or devious ways, by the observation and record of major or minor facts, work towards the sum of knowledge.

The employment of agents is on occasion the most wholesale way in which intelligence can be gained, and at its best it furnishes a broader basis upon which to build than the others. The work of such persons does not always depend on the accuracy of vision of an individual, which is a very variable quality, but is often established on statements of facts produced with the greatest care by the enemy for his own use. On the other hand, it is absolutely dependent on the *bona fides* of a class which is universally looked upon with distrust and on the ability of an individual to discriminate between what is true and what may be fiction purposely arranged for his benefit. It is a slow method, the transmission of the news gained being of necessity mostly effected through devious channels. It is also unreliable as to the quantity and frequency of the information furnished, for though the collection of the latter is not much affected by the weather, it depends on factors which are not under the control of the agent or his employers.

Reconnaissance is the most direct, and probably the quickest way of obtaining news of the enemy. It is not uniform, however, in amount or quality, because it generally depends on the quickness of eye and power of appreciation of some scout or observer watching from a distance ; and it is liable to be interrupted or affected by atmospheric conditions.

Lastly comes the third method mentioned. If a prisoner gives away information either through stupidity or from a desire to curry favour, and to better his lot, a good deal may be attained at one bound. But this applies chiefly to the information given by officers, who are not very often captured, and are, moreover, not in the habit of imparting valuable news. A soldier's knowledge of what is going on on his own side is comparatively limited. Communications from prisoners, also, are to be accepted with reserve. In the direction of identification the activity of an Intelligence Section is largely confined to the examination of the badges or equipment worn by the dead and by prisoners. The personality of the individual of course has no military value, but the identity discs and effects of the dead are carefully guarded for eventual return to their Government. The examination of letters, diaries, and orders also claims a great deal of attention. Newspapers are rarely of value, because no sane Government allows current details of the nature sought to be published by the press. On the other hand, soldiers' diaries and letters are often indiscreet in the extreme, for the writers, in describing the physical condition of the men often unwittingly betray the state of their morale, and in recording their impressions of the effect produced by the enemy's rifle fire, or the havoc wrought by his artillery, quite innocently give away valuable information as to where the shoe pinches.

Since the composition of the larger formations of all armies is known, it is possible, except in those cases where sweeping changes are made during a war, to extract vital information from the connection of even a single soldier killed or captured at a certain spot with a certain battalion. The result of ascertaining that this battalion was at that point at a given time may lead to the first suspicion that a much larger formation to which that battalion belongs is not somewhere else where its presence has been assumed. The possible significance of the results of such a discovery when corroborated

is obvious. This explains why the identification of units with localities by means of accoutrements, badges, etc., takes so much of the time of certain bureaus in all armies. As it has been flippantly, but by no means inaccurately, expressed, an important part of the duty of a great General Staff is that of constituting army corps out of shoulder-straps.

During the war the air is full of rumours even at General Headquarters, and when these rumours are concerned with the dispositions of the enemy their scope is much enlarged if the hostile army is composed of forces of different nationalities. On the other hand, it is not only the connection of units with localities that is useful. It often happens that the mere presence of a unit being in the field betrays the fact that reinforcements have come up, or that new formations are being raised, for, inaccurate as knowledge of the enemy may be, it is generally sufficient for the original organisation of his army to be known.

As is seen, a considerable part of intelligence work is synthetic in character, and amounts to the building up first of a possible and then of a probable theory based on a mass of suspicions, facts which merely amount to side-lights, and established evidence. It resembles that of a detective, or the framer of a jig-saw puzzle. No small clue or seemingly irrelevant fact can be neglected. It is often an apparently useless scrap of information that fits in and forms the final link in a chain of evidence.

It is obvious, apart from discussion as to causes and results, however, that if all this trouble is actually taken to identify individuals, whether in connection with places or not, it must be considered worth doing. And it follows that it must be worth while to put every obstacle in the way of the enemy doing the same. That this view is held is proved by the pains at which all the combatants in the present war are to prevent reference in the press to units in the field. This reticence is not maintained in order to deny to the general public news which would quite naturally and rightly be of absorbing interest, but in order not to give gratis to the enemy information he needs, and to acquire which—if it is not presented to him—he is forced to spend much money and trouble.

Is it better to help the nation in its struggle for existence by an admittedly tantalising reticence, or to satisfy the people's

curiosity and natural anxiety at the risk of endangering national success in the field? This is the question. To it there can be only one answer.

A further and natural step beyond this negative policy of withholding from the enemy the knowledge of where troops are is the more active course of inducing him to suppose that they are in localities remote from their actual situation. This, of course, appertains to the art of mystifying, misleading, and surprising the enemy, which is so valuable a part of the conduct of war, and reference may be made to what possibly was an example of its existence on a grand scale in recent war, *i.e.* that between Russia and Japan.

Before and during the commencement of the battle of Mukden the great unknown factor to the Russians was the direction in which Marshal Oyama would throw into the fight the weight of General Nogi's 3rd Army, then on its way up from Port Arthur. Its action was bound to have a great influence on the battle. It is true that the creation of the new Japanese 5th Army away on the east was also somewhat of a mystery to the Russians, but its existence had been discovered, and it had been located approximately. As is known, the Japanese Commander intended to employ the bulk of the 3rd Army in a sudden blow in great strength on the west against the Russian right. To assist in this scheme he detached a portion of the 3rd Army to act with the 5th on his right, which combined force was to open the action by an attack in the east calculated to cause the Russians to transfer strength to that quarter, and so away from the quarter where the Japanese main stroke was to fall. The ruse succeeded, and it is believed that its success was largely due to the fact that the fraction of General Nogi's troops on the east purposely advertised their presence with the 5th Army.

Similarly, reports of an intended invasion of England may be spread by the enemy in the hope of causing a dislocation of plans of which full advantage can be taken. Such a course would only be in accordance with the action of the Germans in 1870, when they spread abroad rumours that there were large concentrations of their troops in the Black Forest—where there were practically none—in order to induce the French to detain forces in Southern Alsace.

Misleading reports of this nature are usually set in circulation by those interested and spread either by their dupes, honest people who are purposely allowed to overhear carefully arranged conversations held for their benefit ; by means of *espions doubles*, or agents in the pay of both sides ; by common traitors willing to sell their own nation ; or by men working patriotically for their own country who have an intimate acquaintance with the enemy nation. As an example of this may be mentioned the presence at the capital of a neutral country of a German officer who was for some years stationed in London, and has an intimate knowledge of our naval, military, political, and social life, and has probably made such a deep study of our national psychology that he would be well-equipped to play on our idiosyncrasies.

December 10-13

In the particular sense of the word already defined, the situation has remained 'uneventful' for yet another four days.

On the night of the 9th-10th the enemy made a demonstration against our centre, but did not press an attack. On the same night one shot was fired after dark by one of our heavy howitzers at a village in front of our left, which is believed to be a busy centre of the enemy. It was discovered next morning from our infantry holding the trenches that there had been an explosion some way behind the enemy's front line during the night, which had caused great commotion amongst the Germans in the trenches. The news of the destruction of the *Scharnhorst*, *Gneisenau*, and *Leipzig*[1] reached the troops on the morning of the 10th, and caused great satisfaction.

[1] [See *Naval*, 2, p. 406]

As had been the case after the loss of the *Emden*, the kindly thought of keeping the German Army posted as to the doings of the sister service was carried into effect, on this occasion by wrapping a written message round a brickbat, which was then hurled towards the German trenches by the best thrower of the cricket ball on the spot. The result of this attention is not known. The information, with the addition of the news of the sinking of the *Nürnberg*, was also given to the Germans by means of a notice-board next day.

Beyond our left the French recaptured some trenches taken from them on the 9th, and made some prisoners.

On Friday, the 11th, long-range sniping was the only activity to claim attention. On Saturday the enemy's guns were rather more active against our left, but otherwise nothing occurred worthy of record. Action on Sunday, the 13th, was of a similar character, the enemy's artillery paying more attention to our left.

To our left, on the 12th, the French repulsed three German attacks, inflicting severe punishment. The Germans withdrew from the left bank of the Yser Canal.

The weather has, on the whole, been rainy and very windy, though Saturday was one of the finest days we have had for some time. Over large areas, also, the clouds have hung as low as 400 feet. Since the German anti-aircraft guns make fairly accurate shooting up to a vertical range of 8000 feet, to say nothing of the rifle and machine-gun fire, it can be appreciated that the conditions have not been ideal for aerial reconnaissance.

On the other hand, a low-lying layer of clouds may not be such a disadvantage to errands of destruction. It may be thick enough to prevent the observation and identification of comparatively small objects such as those whose presence it is usually sought to discover, but not to hide the features of the country, such as towns, villages, and rivers, and so prevent an airman orienting himself by sight. When this is so he can fly above the cloud bank until he arrives over the point which he wishes to attack and then drop his bombs unseen from below, or he can descend and drop them from a lower altitude. It is easier to discern large objects on the ground through cloud than it is for those below to see an aeroplane through the same medium. The moral effect of 'bolts from the blue,' or, rather, from the blank grey, is somewhat greater than when the destroyer is actually seen.

In the matter of sniping, the Germans, thorough as always, are well prepared. Some of their sharpshooters are armed with rifles having telescopic sights and are equipped with small bullet-proof shields, the latter being painted in cubist patterns in futurist colours in order to obtain concealment by confusion. Success in this somewhat murderous form of warfare is largely a matter of position and luck; but it is remarkable what can be done by pains and skill. At some points, where we are fortunate in having some exceptionally

good shots who are also keen on this work, we have established a mastery over the German sharpshooters which enables our men to leave their trenches, whilst the occupants of the German front line dare not show a head above the parapet. It would be interesting to explain exactly how this result has been achieved, but the time for such disclosures has not yet arrived.

December 14-17

There is now some definite action on our front to report. In conjunction with the French, who are also pressing, a forward movement has been started which has resulted in a small gain of ground.

On the night of the 13th-14th, to the south of the Lys, some of the Indian troops rushed two German sap-heads and gained possession of them. On Monday, the 14th, on our right, the artillery of both sides was kept employed, our guns taking the greater share in the action, and there was rifle fire all along the line. It was on the left that a somewhat more important operation was initiated. Here, after a bombardment of a section of the German position, our infantry pushed forward at a point to the west of Wytschaete. We captured some sections of trench at a loss to the enemy of 120 killed, and 2 officers and 60 men taken prisoner. Beyond our left the Germans were also forced back some distance along the line running between St. Eloi, to the south-east of Ypres, and Zonnebeke, to the north of the Ypres-Menin Road. North of Ypres the Germans also withdrew at certain points. That night the enemy fired 250 shell into Armentières.

Next day, Tuesday, there was no advance made by either side. To the north of the Lys our artillery action continued, and our infantry maintained the gain in ground made the day before. On our immediate left the French were opposed by a stubborn resistance and made no further progress. During the night, near Givenchy, an assault was carried out in three bodies against the German saps. Two of these attacks were successful, and our troops retained possession of a certain length of each sap. In the centre a minor attack against a German trench was also successful. Beyond our right the French gained some ground.

On Wednesday, the 16th, the Germans started what

looked like an advance in force against our right, but it did not develop; and in the centre sapping operations alone occupied each side. On our left we maintained the ground won on the 14th, and to the north of us the French made some progress, capturing some 400 yards of trench on the north of the Menin Road, from which we were driven by the Prussian Guard on October 11.

On Thursday, the 17th, nothing happened on our right, but it was noticeable that the enemy showed signs of being in expectation of an attack by manning his fire trenches in force. In the centre sapping continued, and some of our heavy guns obtained several hits upon a German howitzer battery and what appeared to be a headquarters. On our left our action was confined to that of the artillery, the infantry not advancing beyond the line they had gained on the 14th. In this quarter of the field two German soldiers who had crawled out of their trenches to throw hand-grenades were both blown up by a premature burst of one of these missiles.

Beyond our left, up in the north, a German counter-attack on the night of the 16th-17th, near Lombaertzyde, was repulsed, and the Germans were slowly forced back east and south of Nieuport, and lost about a hundred sailors and marines, captured by the French.

From a prisoner captured on the 14th it has been ascertained that both the 23rd Regiment and Jägers suffered enormous losses on November 4. The same man described November 5 as a 'terrible day,' and mentions that he had never before seen such mud as that in which the Germans were operating, and that the troops were suffering very much from the water in the trenches. The shelling that he went through on the 14th of this month he states to have exceeded all his previous experience.

We have reason to believe from the evidence of prisoners that many of the Landwehr are heartily sick of the war, and resent the harsh treatment of their officers. They have been persuaded that the British ill-treat their prisoners, and but for this some would be willing to surrender.

The Germans appear to be discarding their helmets, the *Pickelhauben* with which they have for fifty years been associated in the eyes of the world. Also, probably for

purposes of concealment, they are covering the red bands of their forage caps with strips of grey cloth. Many variations in their uniforms are now to be seen, some of the troops wearing their peace clothing, which is of brighter colour than the grey service dress. There is evidence that certain of the units facing us are much under strength.

The opposition now being encountered resembles to some extent that met with by us in the beginning of October, when we first reached the Franco-Belgian frontier and before the Germans brought up their full force and assumed the offensive. It has one great difference, however, and that is that the enemy is in much greater force and his positions are much stronger and better organised than they were two months ago. Then an advance by either side implied movement across enclosed and very difficult country—as it does still—and for us it meant the attack of skilfully but hastily fortified strong points or villages held to a large extent by cavalry and Jägers, with a large proportion of machine-guns. What we have in front of us to-day is no longer a succession of isolated points. There still are such points, and some are the same, but they are stronger and form part of a practically continuous defensive zone, consisting in some places of several lines of cunningly sited and carefully constructed works. This zone really amounts to a maze of fire trenches and obstacles. Every known form of obstacle is used, the entanglements—to select the most common—varying from loose coils of wire to securely staked networks of from 18 inches to nearly 6 feet in height and of different widths.

These measures of defence are only such as are to be expected from troops who are well trained and have ample resources and time. And there are, of course, ways in which they can be overcome. But where these methods are applied the rate of advance is necessarily slow, and when it is reported in laconic terms that ground has been gained at a certain point, topographically the gain may amount to only a few yards. Tactically, on the other hand, the progress implied by even such a small step forward may be important, for a trench, a cluster of trenches, the edge of a wood, a building, a village, or a knoll may have been reached, the possession of which will facilitate further operations.

Siege approaches, such as saps, help the attacker to

advance under cover and so to minimise loss, but they do not and cannot obviate liability to surprise receptions of the nature indicated when once the enemy's works are gained. The only certain method of preventing this is by a prolonged bombardment with high-explosive shell till trenches, mines, and machine-guns are reduced to scrap heaps, or to mine under them and blow them into the air.

December 18-21

The activity on our part which commenced on December 14 in conjunction with the pressure brought to bear by our Allies along the whole line has continued. On Friday, the 18th, on our right centre we made progress, capturing some sap-heads and twenty-five prisoners. Many dead Germans were found by us, presumably killed by our artillery fire. On our left a heavy bombardment was directed by us against the German trenches in that area. Our guns had got the range to a nicety, and must have inflicted considerable damage, every section of this portion of the enemy's line being subjected to bursts of concentrated fire. In the centre our infantry executed some most gallant attacks. They were successful in driving the enemy from his fire trenches, but they could not hold the latter when captured, and retired to their former positions. But there was a net gain of ground at different points along the whole front. Both to the north and south of us the French continued to gain ground, and took many prisoners and several machine-guns.

During the night of the 18th and early hours of the 19th, on our right three lengths of trenches and two machine-guns were taken by us, and an extent of ground was gained varying from 300 to 500 yards. The enemy, however, counter-attacked on the morning of the 19th, and forced us to evacuate a portion of the position we had won. Some heavy fighting then ensued, the Germans making determined efforts to regain all the ground they had lost. By weight of numbers they succeeded so far that on the morning of the 20th only two sap-heads remained in our hands.

On the 19th, on our left centre, we were successful in regaining certain defended houses and trenches. On the left the bombardment was maintained as on the previous day.

On Sunday, the 20th, the Germans made an effort to check the general progress of the Allied offensive by a counter-attack on a considerable front against our right and the left of the French acting to the south of us. During the morning they advanced against our line in some strength, and though suffering heavy losses succeeded by about midday in gaining temporary possession of some of our advanced trenches. But in the afternoon our troops, returning to the charge, retook a village which the enemy had just occupied and some of the neighbouring trenches. By the early morning of Monday, the 21st, the greater part of our line had been restored. Meanwhile, in our centre, on Sunday, the enemy, perhaps with a view to supporting the operation against our right, demonstrated with artillery and trench-mortars, but did not launch any infantry assault. In our centre we gained one more house from the enemy, destroyed another, and consolidated our foothold at this point. On our left our guns alone took part in the action.

After one of our attacks made on the 18th in the centre of the line, there occurred an innovation in our relations with the enemy. A kind of armistice was concluded in order to permit of the burying of the dead on both sides.

Of the recent action the employment of bombs has undoubtedly been the chief feature. Indeed, the throwing of large bombs from trench-mortars, and of similar smaller missiles or grenades from rifles or by hand, has now become general all along the line. As has been stated when the fighting reaches the stage of trench warfare at short range—as it has now done over a front of very many miles—these missiles take the place of the projectiles of longer range weapons, which cannot be used with safety owing to the propinquity to each other of the front lines of either side. The great use made by the Germans of these engines of destruction is only one more sign of the reliance they place upon every possible means of helping their infantry.

An artillery bombardment of the enemy's positions—such as has recently been carried out—viewed from the high ground on our left is a most impressive sight. After a short burst of fire lasting perhaps for only three or four minutes the hostile trenches are obscured by a pall of smoke, in the midst of which can be seen the flashes of the shrapnel bursts and the

miniature volcanoes of earth where the high-explosive common shells burst in the soft clay soil. Then, if an infantry attack is to be launched the cannonade suddenly ceases, there is a moment of suspense, and a swarm of khaki figures springs from our trenches and rushes across the fire-swept zone of possibly a hundred yards in breadth. Instantly there breaks out the rattle of machine-guns and musketry. There is some hesitation as the stormers reach the entanglement ; and then, if the assault succeeds, they disappear into the enemy's trenches, leaving a few or many scattered bodies lying in the track of their advance. Save at such moments as these there is often no movement whatever in the battle zone, for not a man, horse, or gun is to be seen. And there are periods of absolute stillness when, except for the sight of the deserted and ruined hamlets, the scene is one of peace and agricultural prosperity.

The mere recapitulation of results attained conveys so little idea of the system of control by which the operations are directed, that a superficial description of the chain of command may not be out of place. In that rather vague area known as 'the front,' omitting the 'bases,' 'advanced bases,' and lines of communication lying behind, the first and most important point for consideration is the General Headquarters of the Army, where is located the directing brain, and the driving force of the Army as a whole. G.H.Q., as it is usually called, is generally in some centrally situated town which may be within sound of the enemy's guns but not within their reach, and at it are installed the Commander-in-Chief and the General Staff of the Army. That a commander can afford to be so far away from the front is due to the fact that he no longer has to, or can, depend on personal observation for information upon which to base action. He relies entirely on second or third hand evidence of things seen or heard by others over a front of many miles, and communicated back by the agency of electricity or petrol. Messages sent in by telegraph, wireless, telephones, motor cars, motor cycles, and aeroplanes are the daily food of the General Staff; for the handling of this mass of material collected by others, its analysis, and its application to the situation for the purpose of framing plans is their work. At the Headquarters of the Army, as at those of corps, divisions, and brigades, a great

part of this work is done by means of maps. Here, in certain offices, may be seen large tables spread with maps, upon which every movement of both sides is carefully recorded in flags or coloured chalks, as news is received from the various sources of information available. At this centre also are the heads of the administrative branches and departments of the Army, which deal with discipline, supplies of all sorts, transport of every nature, the transmission of information, and the medical services. Naturally, all the people concerned in this work are billeted in houses, and unless the town has been previously in the occupation of the enemy, the life of the inhabitants outwardly goes on almost normally.

As the Army moves backwards or forwards, General Headquarters is transferred from one place to another, but it is always maintained at such a distance from the fighting line that it is not disturbed by the operations or influenced by what is going on in one part of the front to the detriment of other parts. Nevertheless, for the purpose of the more immediate control and direction of operations, the Commander-in-Chief has one or more central posts nearer the front, at which he can more conveniently meet his subordinate commanders for consultation, and to which the latter can more quickly send reports or their representatives. These are called *postes de commandement*, or report centres. Touch is maintained daily between General Headquarters, Corps Headquarters, and the General and Corps Headquarters of the Allies by means of special *liaison* officers, who travel to and fro by motor. They can convey personally the wishes of those authorities whom they connect, and, knowing the views of both, can, if necessary, verbally amplify written communications.

Behind their respective corps, and some way in front of General Headquarters, but also generally in a town and far enough from the firing line to be immune from the turmoil of the fighting, are the Corps Headquarters. These are replicas on a smaller scale—suitable to the requirements and lesser size of a corps—of General Headquarters. At them, as may be supposed, are stationed the corps commanders and their staffs. These commanders also are kept in touch with each other by *liaison* officers and have their *postes de commandement.*

Again, a step farther down the military hierarchy, and still closer to the front, come Divisional Headquarters. These are pushed as far forward as is compatible with comparative immunity from hostile artillery fire. With heavy howitzers or guns in the field, complete immunity is unobtainable at the distance from the front at which it is desirable for divisional commanders to exercise control. Here in this neighbourhood are to be found the first visible signs that fighting is going on. These do not consist so much in the ruined houses and devastated villages, which are rather proofs of past fighting, and may be in evidence even behind General Headquarters, but consist paradoxically enough in the actual absence of any traces of the presence of masses of soldiers, for though the area from here onwards may contain thousands of troops, all cavalry, artillery, and infantry will alike be so hidden away in villages, in woods, or in folds of the ground, that there will be no trace of them in the landscape. This is one result of the all-pervading and all-seeing aeroplane. On the roads, however, at this distance from the firing line the transport will be moving freely.

Yet another stage farther towards the fighting line are the Brigade Headquarters. The brigadier, with his staff, may be in a house, when he can get one in a conveniently situated village where his dwelling-place will be inconspicuous amongst the other buildings, but it is as likely that his office will be in an underground dug-out—roofed with earth and well hidden, for the area in which he lives and moves is liable to be swept at any time by a hail of shells, to say nothing of the rifle bullets which are constant visitors. In this district there are even less traces of military occupation than farther back, since a greater proportion of the occupants are below ground, and the movement of transport by day is more limited. Nevertheless, even as far up as this, the population can be seen continuing their usual avocations—ploughing, sowing, or reaping as the case may be.

Still farther on, some 400 or 500 yards from Brigade Headquarters, lies the belt of country in which hide the supports and actual firing line. In this will be found the battalion commanders. Seamed with dug-outs, burrows, trenches, and excavations of every kind, and pitted with craters, it is bounded on the front by a long discontinuous irregular line

fringed with barbed wire and broken by saps wriggling still more to the front. This is the Ultima Thule. Beyond, of width varying according to the nature of the fighting and of the ground, is neutral territory, the No-man's-land between the hostile forces. It is strewn with the dead of both sides, some lying, others caught and propped in the sagging wire, where they may have been for days, still others half buried in craters or destroyed parapets. When darkness falls, with infinite caution, an occasional patrol or solitary sniper may explore this gruesome area, crawling amongst the débris—possibly of many fights—over the dead bodies and the inequalities of the ground till some point of vantage is gained whence the enemy's position can be examined or a good shot obtained. On the other side of this zone of the unburied dead bristles a similar fringe of wire and a long succession of low mounds and parapets—the position of the enemy. And woe betide the man who in daylight puts up his head carelessly to take a long glance at it.

From General Headquarters, miles behind, *via* divisional, brigade, and battalion headquarters, to the officer or man in the observation post in front of the firing line there is a long trail of wire. For the first part of the distance it is carried on permanent telegraph posts, next on the slender black and white military posts, then it may be looped from tree to tree or along the hedges, and, finally, it lies half hidden in the mud at the roadside. But it serves to convey the orders of the commander to the points where his wishes are ultimately translated into action.

December 21-24

As regards our right, where heavy fighting took place on Sunday, it will be remembered that in this quarter the greater part of our line had been restored by the early morning of Monday, the 21st. On that day the action was continued with determination by both sides. Our efforts were chiefly directed to lessening a small gap which still existed in the centre of this section of our front, and as reinforcements were thrown into the fight, the Germans were gradually driven from the trenches they were holding. During the afternoon they made a fresh effort, endeavouring to work

round the flanks of the troops holding a village. Here a most gallant and stubborn defence was made by our men under a very severe fire directed on them from three sides at once, but their position finally became so precarious that a retirement was ordered.

The enemy's success was, however, short-lived. Reinforcements arrived, stormed the village, and established themselves firmly in the trenches round it. In this action the French co-operated and gave us the most valuable assistance.

The fighting on this afternoon and during the night took place in a perfect hurricane of driving rain and sleet. Night brought no cessation of the desperate struggle, and the enemy's searchlights and flares lit up the darkness. Friend and foe were now fighting at close quarters, in such a maze of trenches, running in all directions, that it was difficult to distinguish the position of the one from the other.

On the rest of our front nothing of importance took place. Our trenches in the centre and left were more heavily shelled than they had been for some days, while on the right centre the area behind our front line was searched by the hostile artillery, which appears to have been reinforced to some extent. In the centre we continued to consolidate the position won on the 19th. At one point our guns replied with considerable effect against some German working parties.

The French continued their pressure to the north and south of us, and achieved substantial gains.

On Tuesday, the 22nd, all interest continued to be centred on the right. In the early morning the troops in the village which we had recovered the night before, who had been fighting all night, advanced and seized a line of trenches held by the Germans. This position, however, was found to be too exposed, and a retirement to the original line was carried out, and our hold on the village still more firmly secured. The fighting in this quarter took place over ground which was literally a quagmire, the trenches being full of water. A fresh attack in strength developed by the Germans against two villages in the centre of this section, and from one our troops were driven back. During the night the line was re-established.

By Wednesday, the 23rd, it was evident that the force of the attack against our right had spent itself, for no further

advance was made by the enemy, who must have suffered severe loss during the previous three days. Along the rest of our line, also, there was no activity. A thick mist militated against air reconnaissance and artillery action.

On Thursday, the 24th, nothing of importance occurred along our front. On the right, both sides confined themselves to bombardment with mortars and hand-grenades.

The Belgians and French between the British Army and the sea made progress at several points.

It would appear from the evidence of prisoners that the strength of many of the German units in our front is still much reduced; some companies muster only 150 men, and there is seldom more than one officer per company.

Though the weather has been generally unfavourable to aviation, several reconnaissances have been made during the past week, and there have been three encounters in the air between British and German aeroplanes, as a result of which the hostile machine has in each case been forced to go down in the German lines. On one occasion our machine chased a Taube, and having attained the favourable position for shooting, the observer emptied his automatic pistol at the enemy without any visible result at about 150 feet range. He then proceeded to take a photograph, and the appearance of the camera seems to have alarmed the German airman, who at once fled.

Upon another occasion a somewhat difficult situation arose when a bomb which was being dropped caught in a string and remained suspended three or four feet below the aeroplane. There was no way of reaching the bomb, and it was impossible to land. Finally the observer kicked a hole through the floor of the fuselage, hooked the string with his foot, and shook it until the bomb fell off.

The country on our right, where the fighting of the last few days has been proceeding, has already been described as it appeared during our first advance, some weeks ago. A great deal of this area is flat and at all times marshy, and is now almost impassable in places. Some of the villages round Béthune have suffered heavily from shell fire. The factories and coal-fields are, of course, deserted, and it is difficult to imagine anything—except possibly the flooded area nearer the coast—which more suggests 'the abomination

of desolation' than this whole district as seen through fog and driving snow. The great pyramidal slag-heaps stand out amid the smoke-blackened ruins of mining villages and the swamped fields intersected by dykes and fringed with rows of pollard willows.

There is no sign of the ordinary life of the place save the few inhabitants who are living in destitution and misery under incessant shell fire, 'mid the wreckage of bricks and mortar which was once their home. Everywhere, as far as the eye can see, there is nothing but trenches, ruins, mud.

The mud of Poland is proverbial, but it is hard to believe that the difficulties produced by it are greater than those at present being experienced by both sides in some parts of our front. This applies especially to any advance over the low-lying areas which, besides being cut up by ditches, are water-logged and in some places pitted with shell craters full of water. In such conditions, also, the construction of entrenchments is no easy matter. The clay is so tenacious that it will not leave the shovel, which has continually to be scraped, while in the wettest places the soil is so liquid that parapets slide down into shapeless masses as soon as they are thrown up, and the sides of an excavation continually cave in.

It is reported that in one place the mud is so bad that in a recent action between the French and the Germans neither side could fire their rifles, and clubbed them, or fought with shovels and pickaxes.

December 24-27

Christmas has come and gone, but it has brought no modification of the situation. There has, however, been a change in the weather, which is, perhaps, a matter of greater importance to the hundreds of thousands of men living in the open than is at first realised. It has become much colder.

On Christmas Eve a hard frost set in, and the 25th December was very cold, though it was not bright, for a mist hung over the countryside. On our right, which has been the scene of the most recent action, we captured a short length of German trench. It was also discovered that a group of buildings behind the German front line was being used as headquarters of some sort. The fire of a certain number of batteries was therefore concentrated on the spot,

the buildings being first shelled with lyddite, and then the ground all round being searched with shrapnel. It is believed that this bombardment was effective. Fifty dead Germans were picked up in one of the trenches recently retaken by us. It is estimated that in the attack on the village captured by them on the 21st their loss in killed alone must have amounted to 400. In our centre the only incident was the capture of two of the enemy, who came across to our trenches uninvited, ostensibly to wish us the compliments of the season.

Boxing Day was quiet except for some shelling by the enemy of a few points near our left. It was a day of mingled frost, sleet, and then rain.

On Sunday, the 27th, nothing occurred. There were periods of heavy rain.

On Christmas Day every officer and man in the field received two most acceptable gifts. From the King and Queen came a card. On one side of this were portraits of their Majesties, the King being in khaki field service dress, and on the other side was a greeting in facsimile of the King's handwriting: 'With our best wishes for Christmas 1914. May God protect you and bring you home safe.—Mary R., George R.I.' The inscription on the special card for the sick and wounded ended with the words: 'May you soon be restored to health.'

From Her Royal Highness Princess Mary's Soldiers' and Sailors' Christmas Fund came a present. This varied according as the recipient was a smoker or a non-smoker, and also varied for some of the Indian troops. For the smokers it consisted of the following: A briar pipe and a small gilt casket containing photo of Princess Mary, a card with the inscription—'With best wishes for a Happy Christmas and a Victorious New Year from Princess Mary and friends at home,' an ounce of tobacco, and a packet of cigarettes. Embossed on the cover of the box is a portrait medallion of the Royal donor, with the superscriptions *Imperium Britannicum*, 'Christmas, 1914,' and the names of our six Allies—France, Russia, Belgium, Serbia, Montenegro, Japan. In quarters, in the trenches, and in the hospitals these tokens of the kindly thought of their Majesties gave the most intense pleasure. In fact, the eagerness shown by some of the wounded to receive their presents was almost pathetic, and many soldiers

have written personal letters of thanks to their Majesties. The Indian troops exhibited their boxes with an undisguised pride and glee, which showed how these prizes would be treasured and handed down as heirlooms.

As can be imagined, the distribution of this number of parcels in addition to the immense amount of warm clothing and other gifts for the troops was no easy task. But the organisation of the transport, the supply, and the railway services was sufficient to cope with the problem. All the Christmas traffic was handled by means of a special staff, with officers stationed at the bases and railheads. Elaborate precautions were taken to prevent any loss *en route* of the presents of the Princess Mary's Fund. They were conveyed in closed vans locked by letter-locks, of which the key-word was known only to certain officers. Some of the vans were also tied up with barbed wire. This great precaution nearly led to disaster in one case. The receiving officer had either forgotten or not received the opening word, 'Noel,' and could not get the van open until he hauled at the fastening with a motor-lorry. In regard to the King and Queen's cards the chief difficulty surmounted was to ensure delivery on one day to units scattered at bases, at advanced bases, on the lines of communication, and in the trenches. Many units, also, were actually moving.

A certain amount has been said about the hardships under which the troops are fighting, which are, of course, mostly incidental to the conduct of a winter campaign. On the other hand, everything possible has been done to mitigate the rigours of active service under such conditions. The troops are fed as no army in the field has been fed before. Both from public and private sources they are furnished with every imaginable kind of garment. Materially, our soldiers want for nothing which it is possible to give them in the circumstances. Morally, they are in very good heart and contented. But there is one thing which nearly all of them refer to when asked, and that is the lack of means of making a 'cheerful noise,' or, in other words, the dearth of mouth-organs! When the men are collected in the burrows and dug-outs behind the firing line in the long, dull evenings when nothing happens, any musical instrument for the performance of a solo or the accompaniment of a song is a godsend.

It will probably be gratifying to the thousands of kind-hearted people at home who have sent out luxuries for the soldiers to learn that there was no lack of Christmas fare for them. At every regimental headquarters could be seen piles of plum puddings, chocolate, tobacco, and other luxuries. Of Christmas puddings alone over eighty tons reached the different railheads between December 24 and 26. The men who came from their turn of duty in the trenches, weary, sodden with water, and chilled to the bone were soon sitting down in their billets to eat their dinners with greater relish than if they had been in barracks at home.

It is wonderful what effect a little rest and warmth and a change of clothes has in enabling the men to recover from the exposure and strain of life in the trenches. One night with a roof over their heads and near a stove fire, and they are again fit for anything. They suffer most in their feet, which are apt to swell after much standing in mud and water, but they soon recover once they have taken off their boots and put on a dry pair of socks. Certain means are now being taken to give protection against the wet. These precautions enable a good deal of damp and cold to be endured, and the proof of their success is the small amount of sickness even in such weather as we have recently experienced.

The country immediately in rear of the fighting line has a strange life of its own. In the low-lying district south of the Lys there is an extraordinary number of isolated farm-houses and small clusters of cottages, rather than villages, dotted thickly all over the flat expanse of ploughed fields. Except where the shelling has been very severe the inhabitants remain, till the soil, and live side by side with our soldiers, who take up every yard of spare space in all the buildings, leaving the inhabitants just so much accommodation as they absolutely require.

The large square farmhouses are most useful for billeting purposes. These are generally built round a courtyard, in the centre of which, in defiance of all laws of sanitation, is a square pit for the midden. On this the windows of the living rooms look out. The first thing our men do on taking over is to start 'swabbing'—to use a barrack-room term; and they then settle down to a life of comparative ease amid the pigs, the chickens, and the children, until their turn comes

again to man the trenches. When they come off duty again a hot meal is ready for them, dry blankets are served out, and they settle down to sleep round the stoves in the houses.

An incident occurred on December 24 which was not mentioned in the last Summary of Events. It resulted in a slight loss of ground to us, but was the cause of heavy casualties on the enemy. A mine was exploded by the Germans underneath one of our trenches on the right of the line, and several yards of the trench were blown in. Under cover of this the German snipers advanced, occupied the part of our line that had been destroyed and enfiladed the rest. When this party of the enemy had established itself, a larger body advanced to the attack. Meanwhile our guns had been notified and opened with deadly effect, scattering the enemy and killing a large number. They then proceeded to bombard the part of the trench that had been captured, and are believed to have killed all those that had got into it.

The following letter from Germany is of some interest as showing the economic conditions prevailing in one part of that country. It is from Lintfort, and is dated November 16 :—

'Flour is fearfully expensive, and potatoes also. Everything is dear in Lintfort; one can hardly buy anything. Petroleum is also very scarce, every week only one litre, and then people must stand all along the street with jugs, and the last ones don't get any.'

December 28-31

Monday, the 28th, was a day of pelting rain. Towards evening this gave place to a hurricane of wind, followed, during the night, by a violent thunderstorm. No incident worth chronicling occurred along our line, neither the weather nor the waterlogged condition of the ground favouring military operations in the low-lying areas; but the French continued to make progress in other quarters, and, among other successes, captured the village of St. Georges, east of Nieuport, and inflicted great loss on the enemy.

On Tuesday, the 29th, our troops on the right recovered by a gradual advance much of the ground that had been occupied by the enemy the week before.

On Wednesday, the 30th, the gradual progress on our

right was maintained. The Germans again bombarded Armentières and shelled our front line on the left. To our north, their airmen displayed more activity than they had lately shown, dropping bombs on Dunkirk and Furnes. The day was bright and frosty, favouring aerial reconnaissance.

The last day of 1914 passed equally uneventfully all along our front.

The fighting is now taking place over ground where both sides have for weeks past been excavating in all directions, until it has become a perfect labyrinth. A trench runs straight for a considerable distance, then it suddenly forks in three or four directions. One branch merely leads into a ditch full of water, used in drier weather as a means of communication ; another ends abruptly in a *cul-de-sac*, probably an abandoned sap-head; the third winds on, leading into galleries and passages farther forward.

Sometimes, where new ground is broken, the spade turns up the long buried dead, ghastly relics of former fights, and on all sides the surface of the earth is ploughed and furrowed by fragments of shell and bombs and distorted by mines. Seen from a distance, this apparently confused mass of passages crossing and recrossing one another resembles a huge irregular gridiron.

The life led by the infantry of both sides at close quarters is a strange, cramped existence, with death always near, either by means of some missile from above or some mine exploded from beneath ; a life which has one dull, monotonous background of mud and water.

Even when there is but little fighting, the troops are kept hard at work strengthening the existing defences and constructing others, improvising the shelter which is imperative in such weather, and improvising the sanitary conditions and communications of the trenches.

Many of the roads leading up, and parallel to, the Allied front present a kaleidoscope of the strangest contrasts. Several types of humanity can be seen, from the wild Arab horseman of the North African deserts, clothed in flowing robes of blue and scarlet, to the tribesman from the mountains of the North-West Frontier of India. And there is something grotesquely incongruous in the appearance of the dusky faces and Oriental garments—such as those worn by the Algerian cavalry—amidst

the surroundings of driving sleet, seas of mud, and long squalid rows of brick cottages, such as those in the small industrial towns where many of these troops are billeted.

French Cuirassiers on the march, looking as if they had stepped straight out of one of Meissonier's pictures, their cuirasses red with rust, give an old-world touch to the scene and an impression of a time when war still had the glamour of romance. But the impression is quickly shattered by the drab reality of a convoy of motor-lorries, lumbering and snorting along beside little mule-drawn Indian ammunition carts bumping along, with the native drivers huddled up to the eyes in greatcoats.

A British Territorial battalion just out from home swings through a village, where it is surveyed by a mixed contingent of Gurkhas, Sikhs, and Baluchis, whose heads, as is the way with the native of India in cold weather, are wrapped in every conceivable form of headgear, even newspapers.

In some of the villages there is a Red Cross flag, marking the dressing station of a unit, to which at times the wounded may be seen being brought, and from which the motor-ambulances move away in the evening with their daily toil of sufferers. As it grows darker there is more visible activity in the area near the front : the regimental transport moves up, batteries change position, and the roads become crowded with troops and vehicles. And threading their way through the throng come the columns of men from the trenches, men covered with mud, cold, wet, and very weary, but still cheerful, talking and smoking as they march by.

That the German sniper, however bold and enterprising in picking off individuals who may come within range, does not always come off best when confronted by the British soldier at close quarters is proved by the following incident which occurred a few days ago. One of our men had gone at night into some farm buildings to get some straw for a dug-out, when a shot was fired at him and two German soldiers suddenly appeared out of the darkness. He was unarmed, but at once produced a pair of wire-cutters, took aim as if with a revolver, and shouted to the Germans to put up their hands. This they did, and were then marched off as prisoners.

The employment of grenades is no new feature of field operations, as witness the name ' Grenadiers ' ; and grenade-

throwing as a drill was regularly practised in our Army until less than thirty years ago, when it was abandoned. It was revived, however, during the recent Balkan War, when the Komitadji bands habitually made use of this weapon. For siege warfare, of course, the employment of hand-grenades has never been abandoned, and at Port Arthur the Russians and Japanese expended thousands of these missiles, mostly improvised.

Some of those now being used by the Germans are of 'sealed pattern,' made in an arsenal probably before the war, whilst others have been manufactured in the field.

One pattern of the factory-made article consists of a cast-iron globe of about four inches in diameter and 1½ lb. weight when loaded. Its external surface is scored by deep latitudinal and longitudinal grooves, which form lines of cleavage for the metal to fly into a number of fragments of a size likely to cause damage. It is loaded with powder, which is exploded by slow-burning compound, fired by a friction tube before the bomb is thrown. Of the improvised type two patterns consist of differing amounts of high explosive, wired or otherwise made fast to a rough wooden throwing-handle, shaped something like a lady's hand-mirror. These are also fired by detonator and fuse, the latter being ignited by a percussion lighter before the grenade is thrown.

Of the smaller trench-mortars the bombs are thin metal cylinders weighing from about four to eighteen pounds when loaded with high explosive and a charge of scrap-iron. These, again, are fired by fuse and detonator.

That we have effective means of replying to these missiles goes without saying.

Some of the prisoners we have captured lately have taken a gloomy view of the situation, have criticised their leaders, and appear utterly sick of the life they have been leading in the trenches. But this probably is not a fair indication of the sentiments of the enemy's fighting troops. They are conscious that the war will last much longer than was at first expected, but the fact that it is being waged almost entirely in the enemy's country prevents them realising that they are fighting in what must eventually prove a losing cause.

They believe firmly that Russia has suffered a decisive

defeat—indeed, it is reported that on December 18 in Ghent all the bells were pealed to celebrate a victory over the Russians and the capture of 500,000 Russian prisoners ; that France is exhausted and ready to make peace ; that England is decadent, and that her people are engrossed in football matches. This idea is due, apparently, to the fact that we are still relying on what appears to them a half-measure, such as voluntary service, and are not, like other nations, enrolling the whole of our manhood for the prosecution of the war.

Their view is further distorted by lies circulated as to the attitude of neutrals, who are said to have declared war on the Allies. Neither the pinch of real want nor lack of men and material of war has yet been felt by the Germans, nor has the consciousness of defeat yet been brought home to them, while their Press is doing its best to inspire them with a fanatical hatred against us, born of the conviction that it is we, inspired by jealousy, who have by intrigue and treachery raised a host of enemies against them.

FRENCH OFFICIAL AND SEMI-OFFICIAL REPORTS

THE BATTLE OF FLANDERS

B. des A., Nov. 25, 1914

Now that definite results have been obtained, the time has come for preparing a balance-sheet of the last six weeks.

It can be summed up as follows. The formidable effort attempted by the Germans during that period, first to turn our left, then to pierce it completely, has failed.

By this effort, the enemy tried to retrieve his defeat of the Marne; he only succeeded in adding a fresh failure to that of September.

To turn our flank, in their old-established way, the German General Staff had, however, neglected nothing; on the part of the front extending from the Lys to the sea, it had massed, between the beginning of October and the beginning of November, four cavalry corps, and two armies, comprising altogether close on fifteen army corps.

The chiefs, the Crown Prince of Bavaria, General von Fabeck, General von Deimling, the Duke of Wurtemberg, in order to raise the morale of the troops, multiplied their appeals and exhortations.

We found their orders on dead officers and prisoners. All agree. The purpose was *a decisive action against the French left*; to pierce through towards Dunkirk or Ypres, for, as one of these orders stated, *the decisive blow still remains to be struck*, and it must be the *drive through*.

At all costs and in all haste they wish to obtain a decision on the Western theatre, before turning against the enemy on the East.

Moreover, the Emperor is there, to cheer his soldiers by his presence. He has announced that he wishes to enter Ypres on November 1, and all is prepared to proclaim the annexa-

tion of Belgium on that date; briefly, everything has been foreseen, except the victorious resistance of the Allied armies.

. . . . . .

To make this resistance possible, we have had to oppose to the enemy sufficient, if not equal forces. What, then, was the situation at the beginning of October?

The Belgian Army, though it had left Antwerp intact, had been too sorely tried to take part in a movement; the English Army was leaving its front on the Aisne to go and operate in the North; but transports and detrainings necessitated long delays; the Army of General de Castelnau did not extend beyond the south of Arras, on his left; the Army of General de Maud'huy stretched from that point to the south of Lille; farther on we had some cavalry, some terrritorials, some marine fusiliers.

This was not sufficient to enable General Foch, who had been appointed by General Joffre to the command of the Northern Armies, to break the enemy's purpose. Reinforcements were therefore sent to him. For three weeks the railway and motor car reigned supreme. Night and day troops were rolling up. They came in time. Divisions and army corps, less numerous than those of the enemy, but inspired with an admirable spirit, were engaged almost as soon as they arrived. During a whole month they were at the front.

Towards October 20 this front was shaped as follows:—From Nieuport to Dixmude, one of our divisions of infantry and our marines were holding the railway line, while the Belgian Army at the rear was being reorganised; to the south of Dixmude we were established on the canal; our line then stretched away towards the east, forming before Ypres a vast semicircle occupied by four French and one English army corps.

The line then descended towards the south, from Messines to Armentières, forming two sectors held, one by the remainder of the English Army and the other by ourselves.

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The German attack, in the first instance, aimed at taking Dunkirk, reaching Calais and Boulogne, moving round us, cutting the direct communications of the British Army from the sea. The whole of the heavy artillery brought from Antwerp was there, ready to be used again.

As early as November 3 the attack was repulsed. From the railway we marched towards the Yser, throwing back the enemy, who had succeeded in crossing to the left bank, and drowning their rearguard in the inundation. Near Ramscapelle the German guns sank in the mud, and half-submerged corpses can still be seen there.

The enemy then, finding it impossible to turn us, attempted to pierce through, and this was the battle of Ypres, a furious and stubborn battle, where the German Army, regardless of losses, hurled its units forward in deep masses, sacrificing everything to the end, provided that end was attained.

Their end was not attained. For nearly three weeks we sustained repeated, hurried, and frenzied assaults ; they were all repulsed.

Our front, with its curved form, was not easy to hold ; nevertheless we held it.

On October 30 the English troops, particularly the cavalry, had been compelled to withdraw some hundreds of metres before the powerful effort of the enemy ; our troops, counter-attacking at the same time as those of our Allies, set up again the inviolable barrier which closed the approaches to Ypres.

The deeds performed there by our army corps, in close conjunction with the English corps which they encompassed, are worthy of the finest pages in military history.

On November 12 the enemy had succeeded in crossing the canal at two points to the north of Ypres ; on the 13th he was already thrown back to the other bank. On November 12 he had also gained some ground in the region south of Ypres ; this ground was also retaken from him.

On the 15th his attacks diminished and our position, already strong before, became unassailable.

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This result was obtained by the army in Belgium, under the orders of General d'Urbal, in conjunction with the armies of General de Maud'huy and General de Castelnau, these three armies constituting the group of armies under General Foch.

The two last-mentioned brilliantly contributed to our success by repulsing all attacks directed against them, and by carrying several important positions between the Oise and the Lys.

The decisive help we brought to the English troops on this

occasion has firmly sealed the fraternity of arms between the Allies. Finally, the energy of our resistance has restored confidence to the Belgian Army, which, reorganised on its own soil, is now ready for the fighting of to-morrow.

The losses of the Germans have been considerable; they certainly exceed 120,000 men. In some of the trenches, 1200 metres long, there were found over 2000 corpses, though it is well known that, whenever they can do so, the Germans remove their dead from the battle-field.

These great losses are, however, explained by a peculiar circumstance. If during three weeks the Germans attacked in deep formations, it was the necessary consequence of the recent constitution of several of their army corps.

The numerous artillery we had assembled on the south of Ypres opened bloody breaches in those masses.

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All this goes to emphasise the importance of our success; its extent assumes a particularly striking significance when one bears in mind that the Germans themselves have always looked upon the breaking through at Ypres as decisive.

In breaking their offensive, we have inflicted upon them the most humiliating of disillusionments. On the other hand, we have obtained results, the importance of which it would be well to point out.

They are as follows. Had the Army of Belgium been thrown out of its territory, William II. would not only have realised his plan of proclaiming in Ypres the annexation of this valiant nation, but he would have been justified in boasting that he had annihilated at least one of his adversaries. He was denied this twofold satisfaction.

If Dunkirk, Calais, and Boulogne had been taken, England would have found her communications hampered with her Continental Army.

Lastly, France, in maintaining unbroken the front of her armies from the sea to Arras, secured the best and most effective safeguard against an offensive return of the enemy towards Paris.

The extent of our success is thus made clear.

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To gauge it exactly, one need only consider the general plan of the campaign and compare the fronts occupied by

our left and the German right, first at the beginning of September and then in the middle of November.

The result obtained—and this also is noteworthy—comes as a result, not of momentary successes but of steady progress, which has nullified the enemy's equally uninterrupted effort.

After our victory of the Marne had, in the middle of September, compelled the German armies to beat a hurried retreat, they at once tried to regain the advantage by still turning our left. In this they were nowhere successful.

Meanwhile we, on the other hand, contrived to extend our left into Belgium and to carry it as far as the sea. We kept it then unbroken on the line to which we had brought it.

The success gained in Flanders, of which the French troops bore the heaviest burden, is therefore the continuation, the prolongation, and the consecration of the victory of the Marne.

The glory of this success is due to our chiefs and to our soldiers. Henceforth it is proved by facts that our command is able to read the plan of the German command, and that it is ready, everywhere and at all times, not only for the parry, but also for the thrust.

As to the troops, they have found qualities they were perhaps lacking in at the beginning of the operations, principally as regards quick practice in defensive organisation ; the trenches that they build are now equal to those of the enemy.

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Highly satisfactory as may be the recognition of these facts, they do not exhaust the reasons for our confidence ; for to this progress of our armies there corresponds the progress of the Russian armies which, from November 3 onwards, has become more marked.

At the gates of Cracow and Kalisch, our allies are beginning to weigh heavily in the scale of forces.

Thus the failure of the German plan stands clearly revealed in broad daylight.

This plan, as often mentioned, which was that of von der Goltz, of Bernhardi, and of Falkenhayn, was to crush France in three weeks, and then to turn against Russia.

And now we are approaching the end of the fourth month of the war, and France is not crushed.

She has, on the contrary, only successes to show since

September 6, in spite of the gathering against her of masses of troops representing upwards of fifty army corps.

It must be said and repeated—for it is the truth, and a truth all to our honour—that these fifty army corps are all still facing us ; fifteen German army corps added to practically the entire Austrian forces, are facing Russia.

It cannot be too often repeated, that since September 6 the formidable masses that assail us have been unable to make us bend anywhere, in spite of their valour ; on the contrary, they have on many points retreated under the pressure of our efforts.

DESPATCHES FROM FRENCH EYE-WITNESS

THE FOLLOWING NARRATIVE OF EVENTS WAS COMPILED BY A MILITARY EYE-WITNESS AT THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE FRENCH ARMY IN THE FIELD

[All tak
from *T*
Times]

November 15-21

The last few days have been marked, except at certain points, by an appreciable slackening of the German activity. On the other hand, our artillery and our infantry have secured a marked advantage over the enemy in what, owing to the form and position of the opposing fronts, is really siege warfare.

From the sea to the river Lys our artillery, perfecting its aim as the result of information from our airmen, has on several occasions silenced the enemy artillery. On November 17, in the Ypres region, we destroyed several of the enemy's guns. On the 19th and 20th we achieved a similar result at Nieuport. Our artillery by its sharp reply on the 19th stopped the enemy's fire directed at the station of Ypres and the road from Poperinghe to Ypres. On several occasions it has seemed as if the enemy's artillery were short of ammunition. Several German shells did not burst, and it was ascertained that they were practice projectiles. Our infantry during the last five days has lost none of its positions in this sector, and it has often gained ground. The partial attacks of the enemy have always been repulsed, while our offensives

have almost always succeeded in consolidating the gains achieved by them.

Farther to the south, on the 17th, the British found in another trench 1200 German dead. The losses of the enemy have therefore continued to be very high. It may be pointed out that when our infantry wavers under the violence of an attack, it is the first to demand permission to make a counter-attack. Thus the troops of General Vidal in the Ypres region recovered on the night of the 17th a wood which they had lost during the day. They made it a point of honour not to postpone the recovery of this position.

From the Oise to the west of the Argonne there have been somewhat sharp engagements, and our guns have inflicted serious loss on the enemy. On the 16th, to the east of Reims, they blew up an ammunition depot, and on the 17th our heavy artillery near Vieil-Arcy demolished three German 77 mm. guns and blew up an ammunition wagon. On the same day, to the north of Craonne, it silenced several enemy batteries. On the following day, near Amifontaine, a German camp was discovered by our batteries and had to be moved. On the 19th, near Rouge-Maison, we damaged a section of 105 of the enemy, and destroyed a large work near the farm of Hurtebise. On the 20th we prevented the Germans from continuing trenches which they had begun to dig near Vailly. All these successes justify the confidence of our gunners in the efficacy of their fire.

On the 17th the affair of Tracy-le-Val marked a brilliant success for our infantry. It was about 11 o'clock that the Germans attacked. They bombarded the village with 9-inch mortars and then launched two battalions against the northern end of the village. Their sudden and mass attack led them first of all to cross-roads and then to a church, and enabled them to capture a mitrailleuse. But this success so quickly obtained was as quickly nullified. A section of Zouaves charged. They began by capturing the mitrailleuse, and then, having been reinforced, they dashed forward, passed the church and the cross-roads, and forced the Germans back to their starting-point. The enemy then tried to break our line on the east, but were again defeated. In this vain attack the Germans left behind several hundred dead and wounded. We lost less than a hundred men.

There was another instance on the same day of the keenness of our infantry. In the neighbourhood of St. Hubert and the Four-de-Paris two of our companies were suddenly attacked by two battalions and driven back from their trenches. The next morning they recovered all the lost ground and took eighty prisoners.

On the front from the Oise to the Argonne our aeroplanes, in spite of rain followed by keen cold, have done very good work. The services which they have rendered our artillery by enabling it to regulate its fire have been already mentioned. They have also on two occasions, on the Aisne and to the east of Reims, compelled the enemy aeroplanes to interrupt their mission and return to the German lines.

From the Argonne to the Vosges there have been numerous actions, in which our troops have proved their powers of endurance. Every day and every night round Verdun and on the heights of the Meuse they have had to repel attacks, some of which have been particularly violent. On the 15th in the Vosges the Germans, having suffered losses amounting to 2500 men, dismissed General Eberhards, one of their divisional commanders. Lieutenant Mandel, son of a former Secretary of State of Alsace-Lorraine, was killed in the course of the fighting here. On the 17th two German battalions which engaged us at Ste. Marie had to be sent back to the rear, having lost more than half of their effectives.

Special mention must be made of the Chauvoncourt affair, which did not succeed, and of that of Senones, which, on the contrary, was a success. Our men by a bold attack set foot in two barracks to the west of Chauvoncourt, a suburb of St. Mihiel. Twice they were driven back and twice they retook the position. They were holding the greater portion of it when on the 18th a violent fire from 11-inch mortars compelled the leading company to shelter in the cellars of the first barracks. At that moment the Germans blew up the building, which they had mined. We lost there in killed, wounded, and prisoners about 200 men. The effort of these gallant fellows, however, had not been in vain, since we had destroyed defensive works which had served as a base for the enemy's counter-attacks. The Germans, who had tried to cross the Meuse in order to support their forces at Chauvon-

court, had, on the other hand, suffered very great losses, infinitely greater than ours.

At Senones, or, to be more exact, to the north-west of that place, a detachment supported by artillery had received orders to carry enemy trenches which threatened ours. At daybreak on the 19th a breach was made in the first wire entanglement by melinite, and our infantry in one rush gained 250 yards. Here our men found themselves confronted by another wire entanglement, and taken in flank on the right and left by enemy machine-guns. They held their ground, however, and dug themselves in under fire, maintaining all the ground they had won. In this brilliant affair we lost only sixty men.

In the eastern sector our resistance and our progress at the Epargne, near Verdun, must also be noted. The Germans during the last few days have made no change in their customary methods. They have again bombarded Reims Cathedral and have also bombarded the hospital at Béthune, which they made a special target. We succeeded in removing all our wounded safely from the hospital. The mentality thus manifested and known to us from the beginning of the war also finds expression in instructions to the enemy's reserve troops which were found in the pocket of a dead officer. Here it is set forth that every French civilian found on the battlefield is to be shot.

It is also to be noted that the German Government has not altered its methods of bluff and falsehood. On the 19th German *communiqués* referred to a violent French attack which had been repulsed in the Argonne. Inquiry into our 'violent attack' on that day and at that point shows that it was confined to some rounds of artillery, and that the Germans had nothing to repulse because they were not attacked. One may judge from this instance the credit which must be attached to German *communiqués*.

November 27–December 5

The above period has not been marked by operations of great extent, but it may be said that along the whole front the ascendancy both of our artillery and our infantry over the enemy has been established. Our artillery, without

suffering seriously from the enemy's fire, at several points silenced his batteries and destroyed some of them. The infantry, showing a spirit of sustained dash, has advanced everywhere, and never has progress been followed by a withdrawal.

From the Sea to the Oise

On December 1 at Bixschoote and Merkem our heavy artillery seriously damaged five German batteries and exploded several ammunition wagons. On the same day at Wydendreft we destroyed a machine-gun section, while on the 4th inst. our big guns silenced the heavy German artillery. Earlier, on November 28, our heavy ordnance in the Knocke district demolished the bridges which the enemy had built for his supplies. The same thing happened at Bixschoote on December 2. Near Lens we had bombarded, five days earlier, to good purpose German supply columns, and on the 5th of this month we demolished the enemy's works near Roclincourt. The attacks which our infantry have repulsed are too numerous to mention in detail, but the following is a list of the principal attacks, with the place and the date:

Passchendaele, November 27.
Bixschoote, November 30.
Passchendaele, December 3.
Wydendreft, December 5.
Broodseinde (to the east of Ypres), November 27.

In this last attack the Germans showed great courage, and some of them were killed on the very parapet of our trenches; 150 bodies were found in front of a single trench. From one end to the other of the north sector our infantry has gained ground.

Several infantry actions deserve special mention. The action which gave us Ferryman's House was particularly brilliant. Several German trenches were carried in succession. The object was to drive from the left bank of the Yser the Germans, who had succeeded in establishing themselves there for a length of over a mile.

The difficulty in the attack lay in the fact that the canal was bordered by marshes which could not be crossed, and the only way of approach was along the bank and on a very narrow front. Moreover, the right bank, where the enemy

had taken up his position, dominated the left bank, which was exposed to a machine-gun fire. The assault on Ferryman's House was delivered by a detachment of 100 volunteers from the African battalions. Our men fought knee-deep in the water in a downpour of rain.

The Germans displayed the greatest courage, and our men had to kill 1 officer and 15 men who refused to surrender. In Ferryman's House itself, which had been turned into a little fort, there were 53 lying dead, two of whom were officers. They had been killed by our 8·6 shells. Close by was the wreckage of their searchlight and their machine-guns.

Not less remarkable was the attack on the park and the Château of Vermelles. Two platoons of dismounted Spahis, with rifle and bayonet, and three companies of infantry were entrusted with the duty. On the morning of December 1 the Germans, attacked on every side, fled and tried vainly to entrench themselves in the château buildings. On the following day and later all counter-attacks of the enemy were repelled, and one of our guns, boldly pushed forward, demolished in turn several blocks of buildings which the enemy had turned into supporting-points. Our infantry captured several machine-guns, rifles, and war material of every description.

Farther south the attack on Fey gave our men occasion to show their dash on the offensive. They had pushed forward by November 28 as far as the first line of the enemy's wire entanglements, which they severed with wire-cutters and promptly entrenched themselves on the ground which they had gained. Throughout the whole night the enemy kept up a continuous fire, but meanwhile our sharpshooters with their wire-cutters and our sappers with their melinite were not less active in destroying the wire entanglements.

On November 30, after getting through one line of barbed wire, they found themselves confronted with yet another line. They suffered considerable losses from the heavy fire from machine-guns and from hand grenades throughout the day, but they succeeded all the same in establishing themselves on the ground which they had taken—a gain of between 400 and 500 yards.

From the Oise to the Argonne

The western portion of this sector during the period under review was comparatively quiet. On November 30 our artillery scattered German infantry columns north of Fort Condé. The German artillery showed little activity, and our troops had leisure to complete their arrangements.

In the Champagne region our artillery achieved appreciable success. On November 27, to the west of Presles, one of our batteries of 75's destroyed a German 4-inch gun, while our heavy guns silenced the enemy's fire near Rouge-Maison. It is interesting to note that the growing activity of our artillery upon this part of the front reduced our daily average of infantry casualties from 100 to 20. Shortly afterwards we destroyed an ammunition wagon, six machine-guns, and a heavy battery.

On November 29 we reduced the German artillery to silence at Blanc-Château, and we were equally successful in silencing his guns which were firing on Taissy, while on the Craonne Plateau we destroyed a field battery. A German machine-gun shelter was destroyed near Vauclerc on December 2, and on that and in the succeeding days we exploded several powder magazines. The German guns which were bombarding Reims were silenced on December 4 and December 5.

The Germans tried to blow up the bridge at Berry-au-Bac, but the barge, with explosives to be set off by a time-machine, was stopped and sunk. The sole success which the German artillery has obtained in this region has been the bombardment on two or three occasions of Reims. The most violent bombardment took place on the day when the journalists representing neutral countries were visiting the town.

From the Argonne to the Heights of the Meuse

In this section the enemy has shown more activity, especially north of the Four-de-Paris, in the Grurie Wood, and at Fontaine-Madame. All their attacks were repelled with the utmost vigour, and our infantry were not content to remain on the defensive. In the region of the Grurie Wood and of the Bollante Wood and Fontaine-Madame

they have attacked daily and have made progress. On December 1, near St. Hubert, we blew up a German field-work, which we afterwards occupied, and three days later we carried several trenches, captured prisoners, and pushed forward nearly 200 yards.

The German General Staff has boasted of a great success on December 1 in the Grurie Wood, but this success was nothing more than the blowing up of a trench which had been mined. The company which occupied it was almost annihilated, but the men in the adjoining trenches held their ground after a furious hand-to-hand struggle, and a new line was established through a fresh trench exactly thirty-two yards behind the one which had been blown up.

From the Meuse to the Swiss Frontier

On the heights of the Meuse thick fog and much rain stopped all fighting for several days. On the days when the atmosphere cleared our artillery repeatedly silenced the enemy. A machine-gun section was destroyed on December 5, while supply columns were bombarded and a heavy battery was put out of action. The infrequent infantry attacks of the enemy were all repulsed, and at several points we made appreciable progress. We also advanced on the 4th inst. on the left bank of the Moselle, and on the following day in the Le Prêtre wood.

The German artillery devoted its attentions mainly to Saint Rémy and Les Eparges.

In the Vosges and Upper Alsace our offensive has made us masters of important positions. On December 2 we seized to the south of the Col Bonhomme the Tête-de-Faux, a crest where the enemy had an artillery observation station and whence he dominated the valley of the Meurthe. Our Chasseurs carried the crest in two hours. They suffered considerable loss, but their dash was magnificent. The trumpets sounded the charge, and the Chasseurs advanced singing the 'Marseillaise.' One of them had brought with him a flag which he planted on the summit of the crest.

South of the Tête-de-Faux we progressed on the Grimande slope, and north-west of Senones near Signal-de-Mère-Henri all the counter-attacks were repulsed, while we were even

able to hold a blockhouse which was only about ten yards distant from the enemy's trenches. A sergeant and four men constituted the garrison, and they were supplied with food in a very ingenious fashion. Loaves of bread were hollowed out, and inside were placed portions of meat and flasks of water. These welcome and nourishing projectiles were then thrown into the blockhouse. The spirit of our troops in the Vosges is admirable.

December 7-15

In the course of this period the ascendancy of our infantry has permitted us to make on several parts of the front progress which appears to have made the enemy anxious. The German infantry is everywhere more careful. Continual irregular firing reveals a certain nervousness in their ranks. The more and more frequent use of light-rockets also reveals the fear of an attack. After the costly and vain experiences of the last month, our adversaries appear everywhere to be reduced to the defensive, and it is we who on all the front have taken an aggressive attitude. In the artillery duels also our batteries have more and more confirmed their superiority.

Between the sea and the Lys the enemy, who contented himself during the period from the 6th to the 9th inst. with bombarding our lines, and in particular the town of Ypres, delivered on the 10th inst. to the south of this village three infantry attacks against our trenches. The first two were repulsed. The third reached our first line trenches, but during the night we retook our positions. A fresh attack made by the enemy on the 12th was stopped.

On the 14th our infantry in its turn assumed the offensive. Despite the wet nature of the ground and the fire from the machine-guns, it succeeded in capturing the enemy's trenches on a front of several hundred metres and in maintaining itself there in face of violent counter-attacks. On the following day, with the co-operation of the Belgian troops, we succeeded in debouching from Nieuport and in taking a position on the western outskirts of the villages of Lombaertzyde and St. Georges. In the course of these different actions the German artillery gave its infantry only very inefficacious help.

Between the Lys and the Oise our progress has not been

less marked. The occupation of Vermelles by our troops compelled the enemy to retreat three kilometres. On the same day we carried some trenches to the south of Carency, and in the region of Quesnoy we made an advance varying from 550 to 900 metres.

On the 8th bloody contests took place on the road from Lille to the north of Roclincourt around a barricade which finally remained in our hands. On the 9th, before Parvillers and Fouquescourt, further progress was made. We are no longer more than a hundred metres from the German trenches. Before Andechy we gained from 300 to 600 metres. We are at the same time progressing by sapping.

On the 11th, to the east of the Lille road, we blew up a German mine. Zouaves and sappers quickly rushed into the hole made by the explosion, and from it threw melinite bombs into the enemy's trenches.

The activity of the enemy has only been manifested by his attacks delivered in the region of Fouquescourt and by an attack near Ovillers. They were both easily checked. Our batteries maintain their superiority. In spite of the rigours of December and the rains which make the trenches a quagmire, the morale and the health of our troops remain perfect. Our troops, well fed and warmly clothed, are full of confidence. There has been an artillery duel almost daily without any infantry action, except during the night of the 7th-8th, when a German attack on Tracy-le-Val was easily repulsed.

The German artillery has been directed on towns or villages. On the 6th it bombarded Soissons, on the 10th and 15th Tracy, on the 10th the suburbs of Reims, on the 12th the town of Reims, and on the 14th the village of Grouy. Our artillery replied, and with good results. On the 9th it destroyed four machine-guns and an observation post; on the 10th it destroyed a battery; and on the 11th our heavy artillery silenced some quick-firing guns.

It is in the Argonne that the enemy continues to show most activity. We are making progress in the Bois de Rolande. Our works at Haute Chevanchée were attacked violently, but unsuccessfully, by fire from the enemy, who succeeded in blowing up a mine in one of our trenches. On the 12th the enemy's mines caused us to lose more trenches at Haute Chevanchée. At the Bois de Grurie we gained

250 metres on the 12th, and on the 15th we blew up a German mine there.

In the region of Varennes and in the heights of the Meuse the artillery alone has been active. In the Bois de la Prêtre we have, from the 7th to the 11th, gained ground each day, taking machine-guns and making numerous prisoners. These men were very depressed. They said they had received orders from their officers not to fire so as to avoid provoking our fire.

In the Vosges the positions gained have been solidly maintained, despite German attacks. On the 10th our troops got possession of the station of Aspach, to the south-east of Thann. On the 13th we occupied the heights north-west of Cernay and the village of Steinbach. The enemy's resumed offensive was repulsed with heavy losses to himself. On the 14th the Germans again attacked, and succeeded at the price of heavy sacrifices in occupying Steinbach. They could not debouch from there, and the heights which dominate Cernay remain in our hands.

To sum up, at a large number of points we have made attacks which have been crowned with success. At no point have we abandoned what we have gained. Everywhere the enemy opposed to us has been compelled to take up a defensive attitude, which confirms the superiority of our troops.

December 16-24

The period from December 16 to 24 has defined and accentuated the results obtained during the preceding period. Our aggressive attitude was manifested with more energy, whilst the enemy was everywhere reduced to a defensive attitude. The violence of his counter-attacks has shown that he only accepted this attitude because he was forced to do so, whilst the failure of everything he has attempted in order to recover the ground he has lost only goes to confirm our advantage. Finally, it should be remarked that in many parts along the front, notably near Arras, at the edge of the wood to the west of the Argonne, and near Verdun, we have rendered ourselves masters of important points of vantage.

The operations to the north of the Lys have become terribly difficult owing to the bad weather. The liquid and cold mud from which the men suffered invaded the breeches

of their rifles, so that they could no longer fire, and had to fight with the butt end of their rifles and with their fists. Our soldiers, according to the expression of one of their leaders, have become blocks of mud. The attempt has been successful to provide for them, when they leave the trenches, proper baths and a complete change of linen, which they appreciate very much. Their unalterable good humour, however, enables them to endure with the best possible grace the rough life which is imposed upon them by this severe winter.

The operations of the last period in this part of the front may be divided into three regions—namely, the region above Nieuport, to the north of Ypres, and that to the south of Ypres. Above Nieuport there are on the one hand the floods and on the other the sea. Between the floods there are the dunes, and it is there where we have progressed. On the evening of the 15th we had debouched from Nieuport as far as the border of the woods to the west of Lombaertzyde. On the 16th we pushed as far as the sea, occupied the lighthouse, and made over a hundred prisoners. On the 17th we reached the crossing on the road from Lombaertzyde, and from the dunes we also made progress more to the south in front of St. Georges. On the 19th there was a fresh advance of 200 metres gained along the whole front. On the 20th a trench was taken, and on the 21st a fresh move forward of 150 metres was made in the direction of Westende. The enemy counter-attacked on the 22nd, but was repulsed. All we have gained remains in our hands. The German division of marines on the coast is unable to retake what it has lost.

To the north of Ypres the struggle is concentrated near Steenstraate and Bixschoote, around the Korteker Inn. On the 17th we carried at one rush 500 metres of ground, taking several trenches, capturing four machine-guns, and making 150 prisoners. On the 18th we took one by one the houses near our lines, and on the 17th the inn to the east of us, and swept the neighbourhood clear of the enemy, taking a wood, some houses, and a redoubt. On the 22nd a further 100 metres were gained. The enemy counter-attacked, but in vain. The operations on the 17th and 18th represent together a further gain of over 700 metres.

First, between the Oise and the Aisne our artillery obtained

an appreciable success, comprising the destruction of a machine-gun and a look-out station near Tracy-le-Val on the 16th, a barricade in the region of Vailly on the 19th, a howitzer on the 20th, a machine-gun on the 21st, the bringing down of a captive balloon on the 22nd, and the destruction on the 24th of the enemy's trenches at the Plateau of Nouvron. Our infantry made important progress in the region of Nampcel and Puisaleine. On the 21st they carried the enemy's first line of trenches along a front of 500 metres and took a machine-gun. We lost on the 22nd, and retook on the 23rd, portions of the ground gained. On the 23rd all the enemy's counter-attacks were brilliantly repulsed at the point of the bayonet. On the 24th we were masters of the whole line carried on the 21st, save a few metres at the eastern extremity, which the enemy still holds.

Secondly, to the south of Laon and Craonne and in the Reims district, the last week has been more especially taken up with artillery duels. The enemy has fired nearly twice as many projectiles as during the week before, but without succeeding in depriving our heavy artillery of the superiority it has clearly attained. The destruction of machine-guns, shelters, and redoubts on the 16th near the Troyon sugar refinery and the Beaulieu quarries, the destruction of a lunette on the Plateau of Vauclerc on the 18th, and in the same neighbourhood two machine-gun shelters on the 19th, the dispersion of groups of the enemy in the Suippe Valley on the 19th, 20th, and 23rd, the destruction of German trenches on the 17th, and again near Bourtaut Farm, in the same region, on the 22nd.

Thirdly, to the south of Ypres near Veldhoek and near Zwartelem we gained 400 metres on December 16. On the 17th and subsequent days we continued our progress, taking two machine-guns, ammunition, and several groups of houses (December 21. 22, and 23). In this region also the difficulties of the ground were extreme, but although the men had to fight in the water and slush, there are nothing but gains to record, and there was no flinching anywhere.

Between Reims and the Argonne our attacks were well followed up, and with such continuity that, despite lively counter-attacks, the enemy was unable to reconquer the positions lost by him from the 15th to the 24th. His attacks

have more particularly developed between St. Hilaire-le-Grand and Beauséjour, to the west of Ville-sur-Tourbe. They may be summarised by saying that all the points of vantage which they sought to capture are now in our possession. In the neighbourhood of Perthes we gained 200 metres on the 20th, as many more on the 21st, and 800 metres on the 22nd. This gain extends along a front of a kilometre and a half, and represents the whole of the enemy's line of trenches.

In the Argonne Wood the war has been a harder and more thankless task still, the difficulties of the wooded and muddy ground making our continuous progress the more appreciable. Four times we exploded German mines, demolished machine-guns and protected shelters, besides taking material of war.

From the west of the Argonne to the heights of the Meuse, from the 16th to the 24th, we have displayed activity, often crowned with success, in spite of the state of the ground, which is more adapted to defensive than to offensive operations. Our artillery, and especially our heavy artillery, inflicted severe damage on the enemy's artillery. On December 17 we destroyed two pieces; on December 18 two batteries were demolished and a third reduced to silence; on December 20 a sheltered machine-gun destroyed one of the enemy's; on the 22nd a battery of 15-centimetre guns was damaged north-east of St. Mihiel, and two batteries of 77-mm. guns were destroyed near Bethincourt.

We have likewise made progress in the Malancourt Wood on December 20, and in the Bethincourt region on the 21st, and in the Wood of Forges on December 21, 22, and 23, our gain being from 200 to 300 metres for three days. One hundred and fifty metres more were gained on December 24 in the Wood of Consenvoye, where we held ground gained in spite of a violent bombardment and several counter-attacks. In the Bois des Chevaliers we gained 100 metres and took prisoners. The condition of these men was indescribable. They were filthy, being a mass of vermin from head to foot.

Between the Meuse and the Moselle the fighting has been less lively than on the rest of the front, but we can record continuous, if slow, progress in the forest of Apremont and in Le Prêtre wood, besides several artillery successes. In the Woëvre and in the forest of Apremont we either destroyed or silenced hostile batteries on December 20, and rushed several

trenches on the 23rd and 24th. The railway station of Arnaville was effectively bombarded on the 18th and 22nd.

In the Vosges we won some 250 metres of ground in the Ban de Sapt, and also held the ground gained the preceding week. Near Cirey our advanced posts were pushed to within a distance of 1500 metres from the town.

As regards aerial warfare, in spite of the greatest difficulties resulting from clouds, rain, fog, and wind, our aeroplane squadrons and dirigibles have done excellent work. On the night of the 17th one of our dirigibles dropped fifteen bombs on the Saarburg railway station and six on that of Petit Eich, five bombs and a thousand steel darts on a train in the station at Heiming. The damage done was important, and the German papers recognised that fact.

In several encounters on the 13th, 20th, 21st, and 22nd our airmen chased German machines and obliged them to come to ground. On the 18th one of our airmen shot with his rifle a German pilot, whose machine he saw dashed to pieces on impact with the ground, besides killing another near Arras and putting to flight a third with some twenty shots from his carbine. On the 22nd another of our officers, pursued by an Albatross machine, succeeded in bringing back into our lines his machine, which had been seriously damaged by the bursting of a shell. Several of our airmen have dropped bombs and arrows successfully on the German trenches. The air squadron which has been in operation on the Belgian coast in conjunction with the British warships has been thanked from the British Headquarters. Our squadron, indeed, has rendered most useful assistance in the work of directing the fire of the ships and watching the movements of the enemy's submarines.

FOUR MONTHS OF WAR

(Report on the Operations as a whole, from August 2 to December 2, 1914)

B. des A Dec. 5, 1914

Four months have elapsed since the beginning of the war.

The conceit of the Germans did not think this possible. They flattered themselves, that in three weeks they would have beaten us to the ground.

A mere statement of this fact is, however, not sufficient

to show the importance of the result we have obtained. To make it clearer, one must follow without restriction or reserve the sequence of events from August 2 to December 2.

Let us, in the first instance, note the strength of the adversary who confronts us.

We knew him to be powerful and minutely prepared for this war, premeditated and let loose by his diplomacy; his effort against us has even exceeded all that was foreseen.

The forces mobilised by Germany on her western frontier from August to November comprised, in fact, 52 army corps,[1] composed as follows:—

1. 2 August—21 active corps, 13 reserve corps;
2. End of August—4 corps, made up of 17 mixed brigades of Ersatz;
3. September—8 corps, composed of 33 brigades of Landwehr;
4. October—5 half corps of reserves, of recent formation, 1 division of marine fusiliers.

To these 52 corps must be added 10 divisions of cavalry.

At the moment when the war started, Germany is in hopes of a successful stroke against Nancy. But she dares not take the risk in view of the strength of our covering force, powerfully reinforced at the end of 1913, as is well known.

So our concentration proceeds freely, without mishap, and all attempts at interference prepared by the enemy are frustrated. The regularity of our transport service proves from this moment the fine organisation of our army.

Our Failures in August

Our concentration had to be sufficiently elastic to enable us to bring our principal effort to bear on the ground where the enemy might prove most active.

The violation of Belgian neutrality reveals to us the intentions of the German General Staff; the north is the direction where the principal part will be played.

Before commencing the engagement, we are compelled to await the coming into line of the English Army, which cannot take place till August 20, so we at once take steps

[1] [This is as in the French original, but the details given only total 49 army corps.]

to retain in Alsace and in Lorraine the largest possible number of German corps.

In Alsace, our first attack, badly led, takes us to Mulhouse, but it cannot be maintained there. (August 7.)

A second attack, directed by General Pau, takes us back there. On August 20 we hold the approaches to Colmar through the Vosges and the plain. The enemy has suffered heavy losses.

But from this moment the unfortunate events in Lorraine and in Belgium compel us to restrict the extent and intensity of our effort in Alsace. (August 26.)

In Lorraine, our offensive had begun brilliantly. On August 19 we had reached Sarrebourg, Les Etangs, Dieuze, Delme, Château-Salins.

But from the 20th the enemy, strongly entrenched on well-prepared ground, regains the advantage.

On the 22nd, 23rd, and 24th we are compelled to fall back upon the Grand Couronné de Nancy and to the south of Lunéville.

On the 25th, a simultaneous counter-attack by the armies of Dubail and de Castelnau definitely consolidates our position.

What had, in the meanwhile, taken place in Belgium? Seven to eight German army corps and four divisions of cavalry, overcoming the magnificent resistance of Liège, were attempting to advance between Givet and Brussels and to extend their movement farther west.

As soon as the English Army was ready in the region of Mons, we took the offensive in Belgian Luxemburg with the armies of Generals Ruffey and de Langle de Cary. This offensive was immediately checked, with heavy losses for us.

Here again, the ground had been strongly prepared by the enemy. In some of our corps there was also lack of instruction and of execution. (August 21-23.)

On the left of these two armies, and in conjunction with the English Army, the army of General Lanrezac, anxious for its right, withdraws then (August 24) to the line Beaumont-Givet.

On the 25th and 26th the English Army, checked at Landrecies and Le Cateau, retreats towards the Marne.

Sanguinary fights take place on those days. The enemy sustains heavy losses but steadily gains ground.

The situation now is as follows. We had either to fight it out on the spot under conditions rendered perilous owing to the withdrawal of our left, or we had to retreat on the whole of our front until it became possible to resume the offensive under favourable conditions.

The second plan is the one adopted by the General-in-Chief.

Preparing the Offensive

The first condition to fulfil is to retire in good order, attacking in the meanwhile to weaken and delay the enemy.

Several of these attacks, brilliantly carried out, inflict heavy blows on our adversaries. For instance, those by the army of Lanrezac at St. Quentin and at Guise on August 29, those of de Langle's army on the Meuse on the 27th and 28th, those of Ruffey's army farther to the east, brilliantly supported from Nancy to the Vosges by the armies of de Castelnau and Dubail, whose inflexible firmness will enable us to resume our offensive movement.

To prepare this offensive, we formed on August 26, on our left, a fresh army under the command of General Maunoury. This army is intended to concentrate during the following days in the region of Amiens.

But the enemy's progress, in stages of 45 kilometres a day, is so rapid that in order to make the realisation of the offensive plan possible, General Joffre has to order the continuation of the retreat.

We shall retire as far as the Aube, if necessary as far as the Seine. Everything is to be subordinated to the preparation for the success of the offensive.

On September 5 the conditions looked for by the General-in-Chief are fulfilled. Our left (army of Maunoury, English Army, army of Lanrezac, now become that of d'Espérey) has no longer the apprehension of being cut off.

On the contrary, the German Army of the right (General von Kluck), in marching south towards Meaux and Coulommiers, exposes its right flank to Maunoury's army.

On the 5th, in the evening, the General-in-Chief orders a general offensive, and adds : ' The hour has come to advance at any cost, and to die rather than retire.'

The Victory of the Marne

As early as September 8 the threatened movement by General Maunoury against the German right produces its effect. The enemy brings back from the south to the north two army corps, and carries out a change of front to the west.

He thus offers a weak point to the English Army, which, having left the Rozoy-Lagny line on the 6th, immediately straightens itself out towards the north and crosses the Marne on the 9th, catching on the flank the German Army which has been engaged with General Maunoury since the 6th.

On the right of the English, d'Espérey's army, has also been waiting; it crosses the Marne, driving before it with energy everything in its way, and doing even more, supporting the action of its neighbours, the English Army on the left and Foch's army on the right.

It is in fact upon our centre, formed by the army of Foch, constituted on August 20, that the Germans will seek revenge for the failure of their right; for, should they succeed in piercing our line between Sézanne and Mailly, the situation will turn to their advantage.

From September 6 to 9, Foch's army sustains repeated assaults; but on the 9th, in the evening, the left of this army, proceeding from the west to the east towards Fère-Champenoise, attacks the flank of the Prussian Guard and the Saxon corps who were attacking on the south-east of that locality.

This daring stroke assures the success. The Germans retreat hurriedly, and on the morning of the 11th, General Foch enters Châlons-sur-Marne.

On his right, the army of Langle de Cary has also made a move forward. On the 12th, after some sharp encounters, it firmly prolongs General Foch's army.

Simultaneously, Ruffey's army (since become the army of Sarrail) has been able to draw up towards the north and hasten the German retreat, though not without violent fights; this retreat is accelerated, from Nancy to the Vosges, by the offensive operations of de Castelnau's and Dubail's armies.

By the strategical re-formation which we have accomplished, we have thus regained the advantage over the enemy. We have been able to hold it ever since.

The Race for the Sea

From September 13, the German resistance, based on strongly organised defences prepared beforehand, precluded any hope that the pursuit could continue without a check. A fresh battle was commencing.

In this battle the German General Staff entertains the hope of turning our left, while we are hoping to turn its right.

The development of this twofold effort characterises this stage of the war.

The result is a contest of speed, which, by the end of October prolongs the opposing fronts as far as the North Sea ; it is, in truth, the ' race to the sea.'

In this race the Germans have one advantage over us in the concave shape of their front, which shortens their transport service.

In spite of this advantage, the enveloping movement of their right, carried out by 12 active and 6 reserve corps and 4 corps of cavalry, was a total failure. This failure came as a confirmation of the victory of the Marne.

From September 11, General Joffre has directed the effort of Maunoury's army against the German right. But this army, with the numbers at its disposal, is insufficient for the purpose.

Towards September 20, a fresh army is therefore formed on the left of Maunoury's army and entrusted to General de Castelnau.

This army takes up a strong position in the region of Lassigny-Roye-Peronne, supported on its left by the Territorial divisions of General Brugère. (September 21-26.)

But to attain our object, even this is not sufficient, and on September 30 de Maud'huy's army is brought into line beyond de Castelnau's army, occupying the regions of Arras and Lens, and extending towards the north to join hands with the divisions from Dunkirk.

This formed, however, too thin and strained a line of troops, in view of the enemy's tremendous efforts.

At that juncture, the transfer of the English Army from the region of the Aisne to that of the Lys is decided on, at the request of Field-Marshal French.

In the same way, the gallant Belgian Army, which left

Antwerp on October 9, covered by English and French marines, will proceed to the region of the Yser, to strengthen the barrier which must be erected and held.

These movements, however, take time. The English Army will not be able to begin operations in its new theatre before October 20 ; while the Belgian Army, which has been fighting for three months, for the moment lacks munitions.

The General-in-Chief does not hesitate, and orders a fresh effort. As early at October 4, he has ordered General Foch to go and co-ordinate on the spot the operations of the Northern Armies.

On the 18th he places at his disposal reinforcements, which, constantly increasing until November 12, go to form the French Army in Belgium, under the command of General d'Urbal. This army, in conjunction with the Belgians and an English corps, will henceforth operate between the sea and the Lys.

The *Journal de Genève*, in commenting on this period of the war, wrote that the French command, by the rapidity and abundance of its transport service, had displayed an 'incomparable leadership.'

As a result of this effort, the German attack in Flanders has completely failed.

The German failure in Flanders

This German attack, as already outlined in the issue of the *Bulletin des Armées* for November 25,[1] is to be of unheard of violence.

[1] [See p. 160]

Twelve army corps and four corps of cavalry are massed between the Lys and the sea. The Emperor has arrived on the spot to direct operations. Proclamations addressed to the troops remind them that the time has now come to strike the 'decisive blow.'

This decisive blow is to be either a piercing of the line by following the seacoast to reach Dunkirk, Calais, and Boulogne, or a piercing at Ypres so as to proclaim from there the annexation of Belgium.

To succeed in this, the German General Staff proceeds during three weeks to attack repeatedly and furiously in dense masses, which are decimated by the Allies' artillery.

As early as November 12 we are in a position to establish a balance-sheet of these assaults, confirmed during the subsequent weeks, and for us this balance-sheet amounts to a victory.

From the sea to Dixmude, the Belgian Army, General Grossetti and Admiral Ronarc'h have held, in the first place, the railway line from Nieuport to Dixmude, afterwards the left bank of the Yser.

The enemy, who had thrown an army corps on to the left bank, was compelled to retire. He was never able to debouch from Dixmude.

Farther south, from Dixmude to the north of Ypres, the situation is the same.

The Germans, who on November 10 crossed the river at two points, were driven back to the other side, and the bridge-heads on the right bank are now held by General Humbert.

To the east of Ypres, Generals Dubois, Balfourier, and Douglas Haig have not yielded an inch of ground in three weeks.

In the south, where the German attack was particularly fierce, for it was aiming at our communications, our troops and the English troops regained all the ground they had momentarily lost, and re-established themselves on it in an unassailable manner.

During the second fortnight in November the German attack, now broken, slowed down. The infantry gradually became less engaged. Even the artillery showed less and less activity.

In the battle of Ypres alone, the enemy lost at least 120,000 men.

Never has a more carefully prepared and furiously carried out offensive met with such complete failure.

The Siege Warfare from the Lys to the Vosges

While this great battle was being fought in Belgium, the war was being carried on along the remainder of the front, assuming the character of siege warfare, from trench to trench, the two sides opposing each other with equally formidable defensive organisations.

It is superfluous to insist on the merit of our troops in

carrying on this hand-to-hand war, never yielding, and often making progress, in spite of the burden laid upon them by the transport of considerable numbers of French and English troops to the north.

In close touch with the Northern armies, the armies of General de Maud'huy and General de Castelnau hold the front from the Lys to Noyon, from the middle of October to the end of November, without yielding at any point.

From the end of October their progress is continuous; strengthening of our positions at Arras and La Bassée; capture of Le Quesnoy-en-Santerre; constant advantage gained by our artillery and infantry in every encounter with the enemy.

Between the Oise and the Argonne, the armies of Maunoury, d'Espérey, and de Langle de Cary find themselves confronted by very strong positions in the Heights of the Aisne, of Berru, Nogent-L'Abbesse, Moronvilliers, and the wooded elevations of the Western Argonne.

In September they have to sustain a general attack, very strongly led. This attack is repulsed, notably on the east of Reims, on September 26.

The Emperor was a witness of this failure of his troops, as again, eight days later, of the failure at Ypres.

On our side, in place of violent attacks, which threatened to be more burdensome than productive, we substituted operations on a smaller scale that often enabled us to gain ground.

The same state of things prevails from the Argonne to the Vosges.

Our armies there—those of Sarrail and Dubail—fulfil methodically and successfully the task assigned to them; protecting our right flank against any attack proceeding from Metz-Thionville; holding in front of them by means of a continuous offensive the largest possible number of German corps; liberating as far as is possible the national soil occupied by the enemy, principally in the Woëvre and round Verdun.

In an early period (September 13-29) the enemy gets the upper hand, settles in St. Mihiel, penetrates to the Heights of the Meuse, and presses closely on Verdun.

In a second period (October 1-November 30) we regain the advantage; we give a certain relief to Verdun. We close to the enemy the outlet of St. Mihiel. We make progress on the

east of Nancy, now definitely immune from German shells, on the north of Lunéville, on the north-east and east of Saint-Dié.

In November we have reconquered almost the whole of the invaded territory between Belfort and the Moselle.

Our Position on December 1

Such are the essential features of the campaign in their true sequence. One knows what opportunity for heroic deeds they have afforded to our troops. In conclusion, we will confine ourselves to stating the position of our armies at the beginning of December.

As regards numbers, the French Army to-day is equal to what it was on August 2, all units having once more been brought up to strength.

The quality of the troops has infinitely improved. Our men now wage war like veterans. They are all deeply imbued with their superiority, and have absolute faith in victory.

The command, renewed by necessary measures of discipline, has committed during the last three months none of the errors discovered and punished in August.

Our stock of munitions for artillery has been largely increased. The heavy artillery which we lacked has been created and tested in the field.

The English Army received very numerous reinforcements in November. It is numerically stronger than when it entered on the campaign. The Indian divisions have served their apprenticeship in European warfare.

The Belgian Army has been reconstituted in six divisions, ready and determined to reconquer the national soil.

The German plan has a record of seven failures of a far-reaching nature :—

Failure of the sudden attack planned against Nancy ;
Failure of the rapid march on Paris ;
Failure to turn our left in August ;
Failure of a similar envelopment in November ;
Failure to pierce our centre in September ;
Failure of the attack along the coast on Dunkirk and Calais ;
Failure of the attack on Ypres.

In this fruitless effort, Germany has exhausted her reserves. The troops she is forming now are badly assorted and badly trained.

And again, Russia proves more and more her superiority as against both Germany and Austria.

The check to the German armies is thus fatally condemned to be turned into a retreat.

This is the work accomplished during the last four months. It was opportune to present it as a whole, leaving it to the European press to comment on it and to judge it.

FRENCH OFFICIAL REVIEW OF THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF THE WAR [1]

I.—The French Set-Backs in August

The first month of the campaign began with successes and finished with defeats for the French troops. In what circumstances did these come about?

Our plan of concentration had foreseen the possibility of two principal actions, the one on the right between the Vosges and the Moselle, the other on the left to the north of the Verdun-Toul line, this double possibility involving the eventual variation of our transport. On August 2, owing to the Germans passing through Belgium, our concentration was substantially modified by General Joffre, in order that our principal effort might be directed to the north.

Awaiting the moment when the operations in the north could begin, and to prepare for it by retaining in Alsace the greatest possible number of German forces, the General-in-Chief ordered our troops to occupy Mulhouse, to cut the

[1] [This historical review 'emanating from the most competent French official source,' of the operations in the western theatre of war, from their beginning up to the end of January 1915, was issued by Reuter's Agency, and appeared in *The Times* of March 22–April 1, 1915. 'It should be understood that the narrative is made purely from the French standpoint. In some portions, on account of length or for other reasons, it has not been possible to quote textually.']

bridges of the Rhine at Huningue and below, and then to protect the flank of our troops operating in Lorraine. This operation was badly carried out by a leader who was at once relieved of his command. Our troops, after having carried Mulhouse, lost it and were thrown back on Belfort. The work had, therefore, to be recommenced afresh, and this was done from August 14 under a new commander.

Mulhouse was taken on the 19th, after a brilliant fight at Dornach. Twenty-four guns were captured from the enemy. On the 20th we held the approaches to Colmar, both by the plain and by the Vosges. The enemy had undergone enormous losses and abandoned great stores of shells and forage, but, from this moment, what was happening in Lorraine and on our left prevented us from carrying our successes further, for our troops in Alsace were needed elsewhere. On August 28 the Alsace army was broken up, only a small part remaining to hold the region of Thann and the Vosges.

The purpose of the operations in Alsace—namely, to retain a large part of the enemy's forces far from the northern theatre of operations—it was for our offensive in Lorraine to pursue still more directly by holding before it the German army corps operating to the south of Metz. This offensive began brilliantly on August 14. On the 19th we had reached the region of Sarrebourg and that of the Etangs (Lakes); we held Dieuze, Morhange, Delme, and Château-Salins. On the 20th our success was stopped. The cause is to be found in the strong organisation of the region, in the power of the enemy's artillery, operating over ground which had been minutely surveyed, and finally in the default of certain units. On the 22nd, in spite of the splendid behaviour of several of our army corps, and notably that of Nancy, our troops were brought back on to the Grand Couronné, while on the 23rd and 24th the Germans concentrated reinforcements—three army corps at least—in the region of Lunéville, and forced us to retire to the south. This retreat, however, was only momentary. On the 25th, after two vigorous counter-attacks, one from south to north and the other from west to east, the enemy had to fall back. From that time between the Germans and ourselves a sort of balance was established on this terrain. Maintained for fifteen days, it was afterwards, as will be seen, modified to our advantage.

There remained the principal business, the Battle of the North, postponed owing to the desirability of waiting for the British Army. On August 20 the concentration of our lines was finished, and the General-in-Chief gave orders for our centre and our left to take the offensive. Our centre comprised two armies, our left consisted of a third army reinforced to the extent of two army corps, a corps of cavalry, the reserve divisions, the British Army, and the Belgian Army, which had already been engaged for the previous three weeks at Liège, Namur, and Louvain.

The German plan on that date was as follows. Seven to eight army corps and four cavalry divisions were endeavouring to pass between Givet and Brussels, and even to prolong their movements more to the west. Our object was, therefore, in the first place, to hold and dispose of the enemy's centre, afterwards to throw ourselves with all available forces on the left flank of the German grouping of troops in the north. On August 21 our offensive in the centre began with ten army corps. On August 22 it failed, and this reverse appeared serious.

The reasons for it are complex. There were in this affair individual and collective failures, imprudences committed under the fire of the enemy, divisions ill-engaged, rash deployments, and precipitate retreats, a premature waste of men, and, finally, the inadequacy of certain of our troops and their leaders, both as regards the use of infantry and artillery. In consequence of these lapses the enemy, turning to account the difficult terrain, was able to secure the maximum of profit from the advantages which the superiority of his subaltern cadres gave him.

In spite of this defeat, our manœuvre had still a chance of success if our left and the British Army secured a decisive result. This was, unfortunately, not attained. On August 22, at the cost of great losses, the enemy succeeded in crossing the Sambre, and our Left Army fell back on the 24th upon Beaumont-Givet, being perturbed by the belief that the enemy was threatening its right. At the same time the British Army retreated, and the enemy was enabled to cross the Meuse and, by fortifying it, to accelerate the action of his right. The situation at this moment may be thus summed up. Either our frontier had to be defended on the spot,

under conditions which had been rendered extremely perilous, or we had to execute a strategic retirement, which, while delivering up to the enemy a part of the national soil, would permit us on the other hand to resume the offensive at our own time, with a favourable disposition of troops, still intact, which we had at our command. The General-in-Chief determined on the second alternative.

II.—The Retreat and the Preparation of the Offensive

Henceforward the French Command devoted its efforts to preparing the offensive. To this end three conditions had to be fulfilled :—

1. The retreat had to be carried out in order, under a succession of counter-attacks which would keep the enemy busy.

2. The extreme point of this retreat must be fixed in such a way that the different armies should reach it simultaneously, ready at the moment of occupying to resume the offensive all together.

3. Every circumstance permitting of a resumption of the offensive before this point should be reached must be utilised by the whole of our forces and the British forces.

The counter-attacks executed during the retreat were brilliant and often fruitful.

On August 29 we successfully attacked St. Quentin to relieve the pressure on the British Army. Two other corps and a reserve division engaged the Prussian Guard and the 10th German Army Corps, which was debouching from Guise. By the end of the day, after various fluctuations, the enemy was thrown back on the Oise, and the British front was freed. On August 27 we had also succeeded in throwing back upon the Meuse the enemy, who was endeavouring to gain a foothold on the left bank. Our successes continued on the 28th in the woods of Marfée and of Jaulnay. Thanks to them we were able, in accordance with the orders of the General-in-Chief, to fall back on the line Buzenoy-le-Chesne-Bouvellemont. Farther to the right another Army took part in the same movement, and carried out successful attacks on August 24 on the Othain and in the region of Spincourt.

On the 26th these different units recrossed the Meuse without being disturbed, and were able to join in the action of our centre. Our armies were therefore again intact and available for the offensive. On August 26 a new Army, composed of two army corps, five reserve divisions, and a Moorish brigade, was constituted. This Army was to assemble in the region of Amiens between August 27 and September 1 and take the offensive against the German right, uniting its action with that of the British Army operating on the line Ham-Bray-sur-Somme.

The hope of resuming the offensive was, at this moment, rendered vain by the rapidity of the march of the German right wing. This rapidity had two consequences, which we had to parry before thinking of advancing. On the one part, our new Army had not time to complete its detraining, and, on the other hand, our left flank on August 31 was too exposed to the enemy's attack. Our line, thus modified, contained waves which had to be redressed before we could pass to the offensive. To understand this it is sufficient to consider the situation created by the quick advance of the enemy on the evening of September 2. A corps of cavalry had crossed the Oise, and it advanced as far as Château-Thierry. The 1st Army (General von Kluck), comprising four active army corps and a reserve corps, had passed Compiègne. The 2nd Army (General von Bülow)—three active army corps and two reserve corps—was reaching the Laon region. The 3rd Army (General von Hausen)—two active army corps and a reserve corps—had crossed the Aisne between the Château-Porcien and Attigny. More to the east, the 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th Armies—namely, twelve army corps, four reserve corps, and numerous Ersatz formations—were in contact with our troops, the 4th and 5th Armies between Vouziers and Verdun, and the others in the position which has been indicated above from Verdun to the Vosges.

It will, therefore, be seen that our left, if we accepted battle, might be in great peril. A defeat in these conditions would have cut off our armies from Paris and from the British forces, and, at the same time, from the new Army which had been constituted to the left of the English. We should thus be running the risk of losing by a single stroke the advantage of the assistance which Russia later on was

to furnish. General Joffre elected resolutely for the solution which disposed of these risks—that is to say, for postponing the offensive and the continuance of the retreat. In this way he would stand on ground which he had chosen. He waited only until he could engage under better conditions.

In consequence, on September 1, he fixed as an extreme limit for the movement of retreat which was still going on, the line Bray-sur-Seine, Nogent-sur-Seine, Arcis-sur-Aube, Vitry-le-François—the region to the north of Bar-le-Duc. This line was to be reached if the troops were compelled to go back so far. They would attack before reaching it as soon as there was a possibility of bringing about an offensive disposition permitting the co-operation of the whole of our forces.

On September 5 it appeared that this desired situation was reached. The 1st German Army, carrying audacity to temerity, had continued to endeavour to envelop our left, had crossed the Grand Morin and reached the region of Chauffry to the south of Rebais and of Esternay. It aimed, then, at cutting our Armies off from Paris, in order to begin the investment of the capital. The 2nd Army had its head on the line Champaubert-Etoges-Bergères-Vertus. The 3rd and 4th reached to Châlons-sur-Marne and Bussy-le-Repos. The 5th was advancing on one side and the other from the Argonne as far as Posesse to Triaucourt-les-Islettes and Julvécourt. The 6th and 7th Armies were attacking more to the east. But, and here is a capital difference between the situation of September 5 and that of September 2, the envelopment of our left was no longer possible. In the first place, our Left Army had been able to occupy the line Sézanne-Villers-St. Georges-Courchamps. Furthermore, the British forces gathered between the Seine and the Marne, flanked on their left by the newly-created Army, were closely connected with the rest of our forces.

This was precisely the disposition which the General-in-Chief had wished to see achieved. On the 4th he decided to take advantage of it, and ordered all the Armies to hold themselves ready. He had taken from his right two new army corps, two divisions of infantry, and two divisions of cavalry, which were distributed between his left and his centre. On the evening of the 5th he addressed to all the commanders

of Armies a message ordering them to attack. 'The hour has come,' he wrote, 'to advance at all costs, and to die where you stand rather than give way.'

III.—Victory of the Marne

September 6-13

If one examines on the map the respective positions of the German and French Armies on September 6 as previously described, it will be seen that by turning off towards Meaux and Coulommiers, General von Kluck was exposing his right to the offensive action of our left. This is the starting-point of the victory of the Marne.

On the evening of September 5 our Left Army had reached the front Penchard-Saint Souflet-Ver. On the 6th and 7th it continued its attacks vigorously with the Ourcq as objective. On the evening of the 7th it was some kilometres from the Ourcq, on the front Chambry-Marcilly-Lisieux-Acy-en-Multien. On the 8th the Germans, who had in great haste reinforced their right by bringing their 2nd and 4th Army Corps back to the north, obtained some successes by attacks of extreme violence. They occupied Betz, Thury-en-Valois, and Nanteuil-le-Haudouin. But in spite of this pressure our troops held their ground well. In a brilliant action they took three standards, and, being reinforced, prepared a new attack for the 10th. At the moment that this attack was about to begin the enemy was already in retreat towards the north. The attack became a pursuit, and on the 12th we established ourselves on the Aisne.

Why did the German forces which were confronting us, and on the evening before attacking so furiously, retreat on the morning of the 10th? Because in bringing back, on the 6th, several army corps from the south to the north to face our left the enemy had exposed its left to the attacks of the British Army, which had immediately faced round towards the north, and of that of our Armies which were prolonging the English lines to the right.

This is what the French Command had sought to bring about. The events of September 8 which allowed of the development and rehabilitation were as follows. On the 6th the British Army had set out from the line Rozoy-Lagny, and

had that evening reached the southward bank of the Grand Morin. On the 7th and 8th it continued its march, and on the 9th had debouched to the north of the Marne below Château-Thierry, taking in flank the German forces which, on that day, were opposing, on the Ourcq, our Left Army. Then it was that these forces began to retreat, while the British Army, going in pursuit and capturing seven guns and many prisoners, reached the Aisne between Soissons and Longueval. The rôle of the French Army, which was operating to the right of the British Army, was threefold. It had to support the British attacking on its left; it had on its right to support our centre, which from September 7 had been subjected to a German attack of great violence; and finally, its mission was to throw back the three active army corps and the reserve corps which faced it. On the 7th it made a leap forward, and on the following days reached and crossed the Marne, seizing, after desperate fighting, guns, howitzers, machine-guns, and 1,300,000 cartridges. On the 12th it established itself on the north edge of the Montagne-de-Reims, in contact with our centre, which for its part had just forced the enemy to retreat in haste.

Our centre consisted of a new Army [1] created on August 29 and of one of those which at the beginning of the campaign had been engaged in Belgian Luxemburg. The first had retreated on August 29 to September 5 from the Aisne to the north of the Marne and occupied the general front Sézanne-Mailly. The second, more to the east, had drawn back to the south of the line Humbauville-Château Beauchamp-Bignicourt-Blesmes-Maurupt-le-Montoy.

The enemy, in view of his right being arrested and the defeat of his enveloping movement, made a desperate effort from the 7th to the 10th to pierce our centre to the west and to the east of Fère-Champenoise. On the 8th he succeeded in forcing back the right of our new Army, which retired as far as Gourgançon. On the 9th, at six o'clock in the morning, there was a further retreat to the south of that village, while on the left the other army corps also had to go back to the line Allemant-Connantre. Despite this retreat, the General commanding the Army ordered a general offensive for the same day. With the Morocco Division, whose behaviour was

[1] [The 9th Army under General Foch.]

heroic, he met a furious assault of the Germans on his left towards the marshes of Saint-Gond. Then, with the division which had just victoriously overcome the attacks of the enemy to the north of Sézanne and with the whole of his left army corps, he made a flanking attack in the evening of the 9th upon the German forces, and notably the Guard, which had thrown back his right army corps. The enemy, taken by surprise by this bold manœuvre, did not resist, and beat a hasty retreat. On the 11th we crossed the Marne between Tours-sur-Marne and Sarry, driving the Germans in front of us in disorder. On the 12th we were in contact with the enemy to the north of the Camp de Châlons. Our other army of the centre, acting on the right of the one just referred to, had been entrusted with the mission during the 7th, 8th, and 9th of disengaging its neighbour, and it was only on the 10th that, being reinforced by an army corps from the east, it was able to make its action effectively felt. On the 11th the Germans retired. But, perceiving their danger, they fought desperately, with enormous expenditure of projectiles, behind strong entrenchments. On the 12th the result had none the less been attained, and our two central Armies were solidly established on the ground gained.

To the right of these two Armies were three others. They had orders to cover themselves to the north and to debouch towards the west on the flank of the enemy which was operating to the west of the Argonne. But a wide interval in which the Germans were in force separated them from our centre. The attack took place nevertheless, with very brilliant success for our artillery, which destroyed eleven batteries of the 16th German Army Corps. On the 10th, the 8th and 16th German Army Corps counter-attacked, but were repulsed. On the 11th our progress continued with new successes, and on the 12th we were able to face round towards the north in expectation of the near and inevitable retreat of the enemy, which, in fact, took place from the 13th. The withdrawal of the mass of the German force involved also that of the left. From the 12th onwards the forces of the enemy operating between Nancy and the Vosges retreated in a hurry before our two Armies of the east, which immediately occupied the positions which the enemy had evacuated. The offensive of our right had thus prepared and consolidated

in the most useful way the result secured by our left and our centre.

Such was this seven days' battle, in which more than two millions of men were engaged. Each army gained ground step by step, opening the road to its neighbour, supported at once by it, taking in flank the adversary which the day before it had attacked in front, the efforts of one articulating closely with those of the other, perfect unity of intention and method animating the Supreme Command.

To give this victory all its meaning it is necessary to add that it was gained by troops who for two weeks had been retreating, and who, when the order for the offensive was given, were found to be as ardent as on the first day. It must also be said that these troops had to meet the whole German Army, and that from the time they marched forward they never again fell back. Under their pressure the German retreat at certain times had the appearance of a rout. In spite of the fatigue of our men, in spite of the power of the German heavy artillery, we took colours, guns, machine-guns, shells, more than a million of cartridges, and thousands of prisoners. A German corps lost almost the whole of its artillery, which, from information brought by our airmen, was destroyed by our guns.

[The next portion of the French narrative is here omitted. It deals with the siege war from the Oise to the Vosges, which lasted from September 13 to November 30, and most of the incidents of which have been recorded in the daily bulletins. The operations were of secondary importance, and were conducted on both sides with the same idea of wearing down the troops and the artillery of the enemy with the view of influencing the decisive result in the great theatre of war in the north. During the first part of this period until October 15 the British Army remained on the Aisne, and a high tribute is paid, in the French review, to the tenacity and brilliance with which the British troops maintained their positions.]

IV.—The Rush for the Sea

From September 13 to October 23 the opposing armies were engaged in the 'Rush to the Sea.' As early as Sep-

tember 11 the Commander-in-Chief had directed our Left Army to put as many troops as possible on the right bank of the Oise. On September 17 he made that instruction more precise by ordering 'a mass to be constituted on the left wing of our forces, capable of coping with the out-flanking movement of the enemy.' Everything led us to expect that flanking movement, for the Germans are lacking in invention. Indeed, their efforts at this time were a renewal of their manœuvre of August. In this parallel race the opponents were bound in the end to be stopped only by the sea; that is what happened about October 20.

The Germans had an advantage over us which is obvious from a glance at the map—the concave form of their front, which shortened the length of their communications. In spite of this initial inferiority we arrived in time. From the middle of September to the last week in October fighting went on continually to the north of the Oise, but all the time we were fighting we were slipping northward. On the German side this movement brought into line more than eighteen new army corps (twelve active army corps, six reserve corps, four cavalry corps). On our side it ended in the constitution of three fresh Armies on our left, and in the transport into the same district of the British Army and the Belgian Army from Antwerp. For the conception and realisation of this fresh and extended disposition the French Command had, in the first place, to reduce to a minimum the needs for effectives of our armies to the east of the Oise and afterwards to utilise to the utmost our means of transport. It succeeded in this, and when at the end of October the Battle of Flanders opened, when the Germans, having completed the concentration of their forces, attempted with fierce energy to turn or to pierce our left, they flung themselves upon a resistance which inflicted upon them a complete defeat.

The movement began on our side only with the resources of the Army which had held the left of our front during the Battle of the Marne, reinforced on September 15 by one army corps.

This reinforcement, not being sufficient to hold the enemy's offensive (district of Vaudelincourt-Mouchy-Baugy), a fresh Army was transported more to the left with the task 'of acting against the German right wing in order to dis-

engage its neighbour while preserving an outflanking direction in its march in relation to the fresh units that the enemy might be able to put into line.' To cover the detrainments of this fresh Army in the district Clermont-Beauvais-Boix, a cavalry corps and four Territorial divisions were ordered to establish themselves on both banks of the Somme. In the wooded hills, however, which extend between the Oise and Lassigny, the enemy displayed increasing activity. Nevertheless the order still further to broaden the movement towards the left was maintained while the Territorial divisions were to move towards Béthune and Aubigny.

The march to the sea went on. From the 21st to the 26th all our forces were engaged in the district Lassigny-Roye-Péronne, with alternations of reverse and success. It was the first act of the great struggle, which was to spread as it went on. On the 26th the whole of the 6th German Army was deployed against us. We retained all our positions. But we could do no more. Consequently there was still the risk that the enemy, by means of a fresh influx of forces, might succeed in turning us.

Once more reinforcements—two army corps—were directed, no longer on Beauvais, but towards Amiens. The front was then again extended. A fresh Army was constituted more to the north.

From September 30 onwards we could not but observe that the enemy, already strongly posted on the plateau of Thiepval, was continually slipping his forces from south to north, and everywhere confronting us with remarkable energy.

Accordingly on October 1, two cavalry corps were directed to make a leap forward, and, operating on both banks of the Scarpe, to put themselves in touch with the garrison of Dunkirk, which, on its side, had pushed forward as far as Douai. But on October 2 and 3 the bulk of our fresh Army was very strongly attacked in the district of Arras and Lens. Confronting it were two corps of cavalry, the Guards, four active army corps, and two reserve corps. A fresh French Army Corps was immediately transported and detrained in the Lille district.

But, once more, the attacks became more pressing, and on October 4 it was a question whether, in view of the enemy's activity both west of the Oise and south of the Somme, and

also farther to the north, a retreat would not have to be made. General Joffre resolutely put this hypothesis aside, and ordered the offensive to be resumed with the reinforcements that had arrived. It was, however, clear that, despite the efforts of all, our front, extended to the sea, as it was, by a mere ribbon of troops, did not yet possess the solidity to enable it to resist with complete safety a German attack the violence of which could well be foreseen.

In the Arras district the position was fairly good. But between the Oise and Arras we were holding our own only with difficulty. Finally to the north on the Lille-Estaires-Merville-Hazebrouck-Cassel front, our cavalry and our territorials had their work cut out against eight divisions of German cavalry, with very strong infantry supports. It was at this moment that the transport of the British Army to the northern theatre of operations began.

Field-Marshal French had, as early as the end of September, expressed the wish to see his army resume its initial place on the left of the Allied Armies. He explained this wish on the ground of the greater facility of communications that he would have in this new position, and also of the impending arrival of reinforcements from Great Britain and from India, which would be able to deploy more easily on that terrain. In spite of the difficulties which such a removal involved owing to the intensive use of the railways by our own units, General Joffre decided at the beginning of October to meet Sir John French's wishes, and to have the British Army removed from the Aisne.

It was clearly specified that on the northern terrain the British Army should co-operate to the same end as ourselves, the stopping of the German right. In other terms, the British Army was to prolong the front of the general disposition without a break, attacking as soon as possible, and at the same time seeking touch with the Belgian Army. But the detraining took longer than had been expected, and it was not possible to attack the Germans during the time when they had only cavalry in the Lille district and farther to the north.

There remained the Belgian Army. On leaving Antwerp on October 9 the Belgian Army, which was covered by eight thousand men of the British Naval Brigade and six thousand

French bluejackets, at first intended to retire as far as to the north of Calais, but afterwards determined to make a stand in Belgian territory. Unfortunately the condition of the Belgian troops, exhausted by a struggle of more than three months, did not allow any immediate hopes to be based upon them. This situation weighed on our plans and delayed their execution.

On October 14 we reached the front Ypres-Messines-Neuve Eglise-Merville-Lestrem-Richebourg-Saint-Vaast. On the 16th we made progress to the east of Ypres. On the 18th our cavalry even reached Roulers and Cortemarck. But it was now evident that, in view of the continual reinforcing of the German right, our left was not capable of maintaining the advantages obtained during the previous few days. To attain our end and make our front inviolable a fresh effort was necessary. That effort was immediately made by the despatch to the north of the Lys of considerable French forces, which formed the French Army of Belgium.

The French Army of Belgium consisted, to begin with, of two Territorial divisions, four divisions of cavalry, and a naval brigade. Directly after its constitution it was strengthened by elements from other points on the front, whose arrival extended from October 27 to November 11. These reinforcements were equivalent altogether in value to five army corps, a division of cavalry, a Territorial division, and sixteen regiments of cavalry, *plus* sixty pieces of heavy artillery.

Thus was completed the strategic manœuvre defined by the instructions of the General-in-Chief on September 11, and developed completely during the five following weeks as we have just seen. The movements of troops carried out during this period were methodically combined with the pursuit of operations, both defensive and offensive, from the Oise to the North Sea.

On October 22 our left, bounded six weeks earlier by the Noyon district, rested on Nieuport, thanks to the successive deployment of five fresh Armies—three French Armies, the British Army, and the Belgian Army.

Thus the co-ordination decided upon by the General-in-Chief attained its end. The barrier was established. It remained to maintain it against the enemy's offensive. That

was the object and the result of the Battle of Flanders, October 22 to November 15.

V.—The German Defeat at Ypres

The German attack in the two Flanders was conducted strategically and tactically with remarkable energy. The complete and indisputable defeat in which it resulted is, therefore, significant.

The forces which the enemy disposed of for this operation between the sea and the Lys comprised :—

1. The entire 4th Army, commanded by the Duke of Wurtemberg, consisting of one naval division, one division of Ersatz reserve (men who had received no training before the war) which was liberated by the fall of Antwerp, the 22nd, 23rd, 26th, and 27th Reserve Corps, and the 48th Division belonging to the 24th Reserve Corps.

2. A portion of another army under General von Fabeck, consisting of the 15th Corps, two Bavarian Corps, and three (unspecified) divisions.

3. Part of the 6th Army under the command of the Crown Prince of Bavaria. This Army, more than a third of which took part in the Battle of Flanders, comprised the 19th Army Corps, portions of the 13th Corps, and the 18th Reserve Corps, the 7th and 14th Corps, the 1st Bavarian Reserve Corps, the Guards, and the 4th Army Corps.

4. Four highly mobile cavalry corps prepared and supported the action of the troops enumerated above.

Everything possible had been done to fortify the morale of the troops. At the beginning of October the Crown Prince of Bavaria in a proclamation had exhorted his soldiers 'to make the decisive effort against the French left wing,' and 'to settle thus the fate of the great battle which has lasted for weeks.' On October 26 Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria declared in an Army Order that his troops 'had just been fighting under very difficult conditions,' and he added : 'It is our business now not to let the struggle with our most detested enemy drag on longer . . . the decisive blow is still to be struck.'

On October 30 General von Deimling, commanding the 15th Army Corps (belonging to General von Fabeck's com-

mand), issued an order declaring that 'the thrust against Ypres will be of decisive importance.'

It should be noted, also, that the Emperor proceeded in person to Thielt and Courtrai to exalt by his presence the ardour of his troops. Finally, at the close of October, the entire German Press incessantly proclaimed the importance of the 'Battle of Calais.' It is superfluous to add that events in Poland explain, in large measure, the passionate resolve of the German General Staff to obtain a decision in the Western theatre of operations at all costs. This decision would be obtained if our left were pierced or driven in. To reach Calais, that is, to break our left; to carry Ypres, that is, to cut it in half; through both points to menace the communications and supplies of the British Expeditionary Corps, perhaps even to threaten Britain in her island—such was the German plan in the Battle of Flanders. It was a plan that could not be executed.

The enemy, who had at his disposal a considerable quantity of heavy artillery, directed his effort at first upon the coast and the country to the north of Dixmude. His objective was, manifestly, the capture of Dunkirk, then of Calais and Boulogne, and this objective he pursued until November 1.

On October 23 the Belgians along the railway line from Nieuport to Dixmude were strengthened by a French division. Dixmude was occupied by our marines (*fusiliers marins*). During the subsequent days our forces along the railway developed a magnificent resistance against an enemy superior in number and powerfully backed by heavy artillery. On the 29th the inundations effected between the canal and the railway line spread along our front. On the 30th we re-captured Ramscappelle, the only point on the railway which the Belgians had lost. On November 1 and 2 the enemy bombarded Furnes, but began to show signs of weariness. On the 2nd he evacuated the ground between the Yser and the railway, abandoning cannon, dead, and wounded. On the 3rd our troops were able to re-enter the Dixmude district. The success achieved by the enemy at Dixmude at this juncture was without fruit. They succeeded in taking the town. They could not debouch from it.

The coastal attack had thus proved a total failure. Since then it has never been renewed. The Battle of Calais, so

noisily announced by the German Press, amounted to a decided reverse for the Germans.

The enemy had now begun an attack more important than its predecessor, in view of the numbers engaged in it. This attack was intended as a renewal to the south of the effort which had just been shattered in the north. Instead of turning our flank on the coast, it was now sought to drive in the right of our northern army under the shock of powerful masses. This was the Battle of Ypres.

In order to understand this long, desperate, and furious battle, we must hark back a few days in point of time. At the moment when our cavalry reached Roulers and Cortemarck (October 18), our Territorial divisions from Dunkirk under General Bidon had occupied and organised a defensive position at Ypres. It was a *point d'appui* enabling us to prepare and maintain our connections with the Belgian Army. From October 23 two British and French Army Corps were in occupation of this position, which was to be the base of their forward march in the direction of Roulers-Menin. The delays already explained, and the strength of the forces brought up by the enemy, soon brought to a standstill our progress along the line Poelcappelle-Passchendaele-Zandvoorde-Gheluvelt. But, in spite of the stoppage here, Ypres was solidly covered, and the connections of all the Allied forces were established. Against the line thus formed the German attack was hurled from October 25 to November 13, to the north, the east, and the south of Ypres. From October 26 onward the attacks were renewed daily with great violence, obliging us to employ our reinforcements at the most threatened points as soon as they came up. Thus, on October 31, we were obliged to send supports to the British cavalry, then to the two British corps between which the cavalry formed the connecting link, and, finally, to intercalate between these two corps a force equivalent to two army corps. Between October 30 and November 6 Ypres was several times in danger. The British lost Zandvoorde. Gheluvelt, Messines, and Wytschaete. The front of the Allies, thus contracted, was all the more difficult to defend; but defended it was without a recoil. The arrival of three French divisions in our line enabled us to resume from the 4th to the 8th a vigorous offensive. On the 10th and the

11th this offensive, brought up against fresh and sharper German attacks, was checked. Before it could be renewed the arrival of fresh reinforcements had to be awaited, which were despatched to the north on November 12.

By the 14th our troops had again begun to progress, barring the road to Ypres against the German attacks, and inflicting on the enemy, who advanced in massed formations, losses which were specially terrible in consequence of the fact that the French and British artillery had crowded nearly three hundred guns on to these few kilometres of front. Thus the main mass of the Germans sustained the same defeat as the detachments operating farther to the north along the coast. The support which, according to the idea of the German General Staff, the attack on Ypres was to render to the coastal attack was as futile as that attack itself had been.

During the second half of November the enemy, exhausted, and having lost in the Battle of Ypres alone more than 150,000 men, did not attempt to renew his effort, but confined himself to an intermittent cannonade. We, on the contrary, achieved appreciable progress to the north and south of Ypres, and ensured definitively, by a powerful defensive organisation of the position, the inviolability of our front.

[The compiler of the report here adds a footnote stating that over forty thousand German corpses were found on the battle-field during these three weeks of battle.]

VI.—Operations from November 30 to February 1

During the period November 30 to February 1, the French Supreme Command has not thought it advisable to embark upon important offensive operations. It has confined itself to local attacks, the main object of which was to hold in front of us as large a number of German corps as possible, and thus to hinder the withdrawal of the troops which, to our knowledge, the German General Staff was anxious to despatch to Russia.

As a matter of fact, the numbers transported to the Eastern front have been very moderate. Of the 52 army corps which faced us on the Western front, Germany has only been able to take 4½ corps for the Eastern front. On the

other hand, climatic conditions—the rain, mud, and mist —were such as to diminish the effectiveness of offensive operations and to add to the costliness of any undertaking, which was another reason for postponing them. Still another reason lies in the fact that, from now on, the Allied forces can count upon a steadily expanding growth, equally in point of numbers and units as of material, while the German forces have attained the maximum of their power and can only diminish now, both in numbers and in value.

These considerations explain the character of the siege warfare which the operations have assumed during the period under review. Meanwhile it is by no means the case that the siege warfare has had the same results for the Germans as for us. From November 15 to February 1 our opponents, in spite of very numerous attacks, did not succeed in taking anything from us, except a few hundred metres of ground to the north of Soissons. We, on the contrary, have obtained numerous and appreciable results.

[The French writer here proceeds to strike a balance of gains and losses between the Allied and the German forces in France during the winter campaign. The result he sums up as follows :—]

1. A general progress of our troops, very marked at certain points.

2. A general falling-back of the enemy except to the north-east of Soissons.

To complete the balance, he says, it must be added that :—

1. The German offensive in Poland was checked a month ago.

2. The Russian offensive continues in Galicia and the Carpathians.

3. A large part of the Turkish Caucasian Army has been annihilated.

4. Germany has exhausted her resources of officers (there are now on an average 12 professional officers to a regiment), and henceforth will only be able to develop her resources in men to the detriment of the existing units.

5. The Allied Armies, on the contrary, possess the power of reinforcing themselves in a very considerable degree.

It may therefore be declared that, in order to obtain com-

plete success, it is sufficient for France and her Allies to know how to wait, and to prepare victory with indefatigable patience.

The German offensive is broken. The German defensive will be broken in its turn.

VII.—The French Army as it is: Officers and Men

The compiler of the report, beginning his review on February 1, states that on that date the condition of the French Army was excellent and appreciably superior to what it was at the beginning of the war from the three points of view of numbers, quality, and equipment. In the higher command important changes have been made. It has in fact been rejuvenated by the promotion of young commanders of proved quality to high rank. All the old generals who at the beginning of August were at the head of large commands have been gradually eliminated, some as the result of the physical strain of war, others by appointment to territorial commands. This rejuvenation of the higher ranks of the Army has been carried out in a far-reaching manner, and it may be said that it has embraced all the grades of the military hierarchy from commanders of brigades to commanders of armies. The result has been to lower the average age of general officers by ten years. To-day more than three-fourths of the officers commanding armies and army corps are less than sixty years of age. Some are considerably younger. A number of the army corps commanders are from forty-six to fifty-four years of age, and the brigade commanders are usually under fifty. There are, in fact, at the front extremely few general officers over sixty, and these are men who are in full possession of their physical and intellectual powers. This rejuvenation of the High Command was facilitated by a number of circumstances, notable among which were the strengthening of the higher regimental ranks carried out during the three years preceding the war, as a result of which, at the outset of the campaign each infantry regiment had two lieutenant-colonels and each cavalry and artillery regiment a colonel and a lieutenant-colonel, and also the system of promotion for the duration of the war. Many officers who began the war as colonels now command brigades, some are even at the head of divisions or army corps. Ability proved on the field of

battle is now immediately recognised and utilised, and in this way it has been possible to provide in the most favourable manner for the vacancies created by the changes in command which were considered necessary in the first weeks of the war. The higher grades of the French Army are inspired by a remarkable unity in the matter of military theory, and by a solidarity of spirit which has found striking expression in the course of the numerous moves of army corps from one part of the theatre of operations to another which have been carried out since the beginning of the war.

The cavalry after six months of war still possess an excess of officers. There are on an average thirty-six officers to a regiment instead of the thirty-one considered to be the necessary minimum. The artillery, which has suffered relatively little, has also an excess of officers, and is further able to count upon a large number of captains and other officers who before the war were employed in the arsenals or in technical research. Finally, the reserve artillery officers have nearly all proved to be excellent battery commanders.

The losses in the junior commissioned ranks have naturally been highest in the infantry. There is, however, nothing like a want of officers in this arm. Many captains and lieutenants who have been wounded by machine-gun fire (such wounds are usually slight and quickly healed), have been able to return speedily to the front. The reserve officers have in general done remarkably well, and in many cases have shown quite exceptional aptitude for the rank of company commanders. The non-commissioned officers promoted to sub-lieutenants make excellent section leaders, and even show themselves very clever and energetic company commanders in the field.

It must be remembered also that, thanks to the intellectual and physical development of the generation now serving with the colours, and thanks, above all, to the warlike qualities of the race and the democratic spirit of our Army, we have been able to draw upon the lower grades and even upon the rank and file for officers. Many men who began the war on August 2 as privates now wear the officer's epaulettes. The elasticity of our regulations regarding promotion in war time, the absence of the spirit of caste, and the friendly welcome extended by all officers to those of

their military inferiors who have shown under fire their fitness to command have enabled us to meet all requirements.

The state of our infantry cadres on January 15 was very satisfactory, and much superior to that of the German infantry. On an average each of our regiments has 48 officers, including 18 Regular officers, 15 Reserve officers, and 15 non-commissioned officers. In each regiment six of the twelve companies are commanded by captains who are Regular officers, three by captains of the Reserve, and three by lieutenants. Each company has at least three officers. In sum, the state of the Army as regards the commissioned ranks from the highest to the lowest is declared to be exceptionally brilliant. The Army is led by young, well-trained, and daring chiefs, and the lower commissioned ranks have acquired the art of war by experience.

Finally a warm tribute must be paid to the work of the Staffs of the Armies and of the army corps, which were formed three years ago and have thrown themselves into their work in entire agreement both of views and methods.

Including all ranks, France now has more than 2,500,000 men at the front, and every unit is, or was on January 15, at war strength. The infantry companies are at least 200 strong. In many regiments the companies have a strength of 250 or more.

In the other arms, which have suffered less than the infantry, the units are all up to, or above, regulation strength.

This fact constitutes one of the most important advantages of the French Army over the German. While Germany has created a great number of new units, army corps, or divisions, which absorbed at a blow all of her available resources in officers and men, the French Supreme Command has avoided the formation of new units, except in limited number. It has only admitted exceptions to this rule when it was able to count with certainty on being able to provide amply for both the present and future requirements of the new units, as regards all ranks, without encroaching upon the reserves needed for the existing units. At the same time, thanks to the depots in the interior of the country, the effectives at the front have been maintained at full strength. The sources of supply for this purpose were the remainder of the eleven classes of the Reserve, the younger classes of the

Territorial Army, and the new class of 1914. A large number of the men wounded in the earlier engagements of the war have been able to return to the front, and these have been incorporated in the new drafts, thus providing them with a useful stiffening of war-tried men.

With regard to the supplies of men upon which the Army can draw to repair the wastage at the front, we learn that there are practically half as many men in the depots as at the front, in other words about 1,250,000. Further supplies of men are provided by the class of 1915, which has already proved to be more than a fifth more numerous than the official estimate and the 'revision,' in consequence of Ministerial decree, of the various categories of men of military age exempted on grounds of health or for other reasons from the duty of bearing arms. As a result of this measure nearly half a million men have been claimed for the Army, almost all of whom, after rigorous physical tests, have been declared fit for military service.

In the depots in which the new soldiers are being trained, the services of many officers and non-commissioned officers, discharged as convalescents after being wounded, are utilised in order to give a practical turn to the instruction. There are still many voluntary enlistments, and, with all these resources of men, the Army can count upon reinforcements soon to be available, which will considerably augment its offensive power.

The quality of the troops has improved perceptibly since the beginning of the war. The men have become hardened and used to war, and their health—largely owing to the excellence of the commissariat—is extremely satisfactory. In spite of the severity of the winter, hardly any cases of disease of the respiratory organs have occurred, and the sanitary returns of the Army show an appreciable improvement on those of the preceding winter.

With regard to the reserves, experience has verified the dictum of the Serbian and Bulgarian generals in the war of 1913, namely, that 'two months in the field are necessary in order to get at the full value of reserves.' Our infantry is now accustomed to the rapid and thorough organisation of the defensive. In August it neither liked, nor had the habit, of using the spade. To-day those who see our trenches are

astounded. They are veritable improvised fortresses, proof against the 77 millimetre gun and often against artillery of higher calibre.

During the past five months not a single encounter can be cited in which our infantry did not have the advantage over the German infantry. All the enemy's attacks have been repulsed, except to the north of Soissons, where their success was due to the flooded state of the Aisne and the carrying away of our bridges. Our attacks, on the other hand, have yielded important results and have been carried out with plenty of spirit, although without the imprudence which cost us such heavy losses in August.

The cavalry has made remarkable progress. Throughout October the cavalry was called on to eke out the inadequate numbers of the infantry, and showed itself perfectly adapted to the necessities of fighting on foot. Several regiments of cavalry have been used as infantry, and, armed with rifles, have rendered the most valuable services.

The artillery has displayed a superiority in the use of its admirable equipment, which is recognised by the Germans themselves.

[This chapter of the report concludes with a tribute to the work of the airmen and to the less brilliant but not less useful work of the engineers, who in the trench warfare which we are now waging have naturally been called upon to display intense activity.]

VIII.—The French Army as it is: Material, Artillery, Supplies, Transport

[Beginning with the famous '75' gun, the compiler of the French official report dwells on its power, rapidity of action, and its incomparable precision, which make it an implement of war of the first order.] It may be stated without hesitation, that our '75' guns are in as perfect condition to-day as they were on the first day of the war, although the use made of them has exceeded all calculations. The consumption of projectiles was, in fact, so enormous as to cause for a moment an ammunition crisis, which, however, was completely overcome several weeks ago.

The methodical and complete exploitation of all the

resources of the country, organised since the beginning of the war, has enabled us to accumulate a considerable stock of fresh munitions, and an increasing rate of production is henceforth assured. We are thus sure of being able to provide without particular effort for all the needs of the campaign, present and future, however long the war may last, and it is this certainty which has enabled us to supply projectiles to several of the Allied Armies, among others to the Serbian and Belgian Armies. From the statements of German prisoners we have learnt that the effectiveness of our new projectiles is superior to that of the old ones.

Our heavy artillery was in process of reorganisation when the war broke out, with the result that we were indisputably in a position of inferiority in respect of this arm during the first battles. But to-day the parts have been changed, and our adversaries themselves acknowledge the superiority of our heavy artillery by reason of its abundance, its power, its range, and precision. The change has been brought about partly by the intense activity of the gun factories in new production, partly by the employment at the front of the enormous reserves of artillery preserved in the fortresses. This source of supply is by no means exhausted. The large number of heavy guns at the front represents only a part of the total number available for use. These guns have been altered and brought up to date in such a way as to give them the qualities of the most modern artillery, and such a variety of models are available that the French artillerists can adapt their fire to all the necessities of war as practised to-day.

There is an abundant stock of projectiles for the heavy artillery, which, as in the case of the field-gun ammunition, is daily growing in importance. The same is true of the reserves of powder and other explosives, and of all materials needed for the manufacture of shells. The powerful industrial equipment of France and Great Britain, constantly fed from abroad, thanks to the freedom of the seas, gives us full security in this respect.

Dealing with the effects of the French artillery fire, the report quotes the statements of prisoners. Captives who have been exposed to a battering by the French gunners always remain in a sort of stupor for several hours. One prisoner said : 'I have served through the whole campaign.

I was at the battle of the Marne, where our losses were terrible. But its terror was nothing compared to the artillery fire which we have had to endure these last few days, with its accuracy of aim and the destructive effect of its shells. I am glad to have escaped from that hell, and I do not think myself a bad German for saying so. I believe I have paid my debt to the Fatherland by the mere fact of having been exposed to such a fire. I wonder that my reason did not give way. It was an accursed day.'

A German lieutenant of engineers said he could not understand the violence and the extraordinary accuracy of our fire. He said : 'As long as the artillery fire lasts there is no use in thinking about making a move to bring up the reserves, and the last shot has hardly been fired at the trench when your infantry are there.'

A German non-commissioned officer thus described what he had seen : 'You could see rifles and men hurtling through the air. All the defenders were blown to pieces or buried alive.'

Those who seek safety in flight are no better off. Said another prisoner : 'The shells pursue the fugitives. The best thing to do is to fling oneself on the ground and leave the rest to God.'

The Germans have nicknamed our artillerymen 'the black butchers.' With regard to small arms, hand-grenades, bombs, and all the devices for life-taking which the short-range trench warfare has brought into use, the position of the French troops is in every way favourable. Thanks to the ingenuity of the officers and engineers, and the resources of the national industry, the army in the field is now equipped with an entire arsenal of new weapons of this kind, perfected by experience in action and varied in type so as to be able to meet all the exigencies of the new mode of fighting. The superiority which the Germans enjoyed at the beginning in virtue of their bomb-throwers and similar engines has disappeared.

Owing to the extended use of machine-guns the number of them supplied to the various units has been increased. Not only is each unit in possession of its full regulation complement of machine-guns, but the number of these guns attached to each unit has been increased since February 1

by one-third. On March 15 this number will be doubled. The efforts of the national industry supplemented by foreign aid make it possible to keep up a constant flow of thoroughly trained machine-gun detachments to the front. The supply of rifles, carbines, and other firearms has been and will be equal to all demands.

The report next passes to the transport service, which has worked with remarkable precision since the beginning of the war. Its first great task was the transport of the covering troops—that is, the troops sent to the frontier to meet the first shock of the enemy and enable the mobilisation of the main armies to be carried out undisturbed—and then the mobilisation and concentration of transports. The transport of the covering troops began on the day of the German proclamation of 'the state of danger of war,' that is July 31, at 9 P.M., and was completed on August 3 at noon without any delay either in the departure or arrival of trains, and before any of the ordinary train services had been suspended. Nearly six hundred trains were required to carry out the operation on the Eastern system alone.

The transport of troops, etc., in connection with the general mobilisation began on August 2, concurrently with the movement of the covering troops. On August 3 and 4 nearly six hundred more trains were despatched on the Eastern system alone. The transportation needed for the concentration of the armies began at midday on August 5, and the first period, during which the most urgent transportation was effected, ended on August 12 at the same hour. The second period of less urgent movements extended from 4 A.M. on August 12 to midnight on August 18. During the first period, out of 2500 trains despatched about twenty were subjected to slight delays, which were made good in the second period. During the fourteen days nearly 4500 trains were despatched, without counting 250 trains which carried siege supplies to the fortresses. It is noteworthy that these excellent results were obtained in spite of the fact that the original destination of four army corps was changed after mobilisation had begun. With regard to the ordinary supply movements, it may be remarked that this service, directed from the 'control stations' on the railways, has worked with perfect regularity since the beginning of the war. During the retreat in August the

control stations had to provide for all sorts of unforeseen needs, such as the removal of military and other stores, and often of the inhabitants from abandoned towns, and the withdrawal of French and Belgian rolling stock, in spite of which not a single supply train or troop train was ever stopped.

In the way of the transport of troops from one part of the theatre of operations to another, some remarkable feats have been performed. During the French offensives in Lorraine and Belgium in August, during the retreat beyond the Marne, during the subsequent advance, and again during the extension of our left to the North Sea, over seventy divisions were moved by railway from one point to another, the journeys varying from sixty to 360 miles, and necessitating the employment of over 6000 trains. To the accurate working of the transport service we owe a large part of our success. In particular we owe to it the impassable barrier against which the enemy's desperate offensive hurled itself in vain in Flanders.

The automobile transport has been correspondingly active. It has been freely drawn upon for the transport of troops, at least 250,000 men having been moved by automobile distances of from twelve to seventy miles during September, October, and November. On the automobile transport falls the duty of carrying material and supplies of certain sorts, notably fresh meat, and the removal of wounded to hospital. The service at present comprises over 10,000 motor vehicles, driven and kept in repair by 2500 chauffeurs and mechanics.

Of the work of the commissariat department some idea is gathered when it is remembered that each of the 2,500,000 men at the front daily receives the following campaign ration : bread 750 grammes, meat 500 grammes, bacon 30 grammes, sugar 32 grammes, coffee 30 grammes, tobacco 100 grammes (per week). Each man now receives a double ration of sugar and coffee, and, in addition, 2 grammes of tea and a third of a litre of wine a day. The *menu* is further enriched by joint purchases through the 'ordinaires.' In addition to his ration of food each soldier receives a certain allowance of money, which he pays into the 'ordinaire' of his company, which then buys for joint use such things as the Government does not supply, notably potatoes, fresh vegetables, sardines, and chocolate, of which the commissariat has accumulated

large stocks, so that the troops can always obtain them even if they cannot be bought or requisitioned in the country where operations are being conducted. What the commissariat and the transport service can do is shown by the following details. On 1st January, every one of the 2,500,000 men at the front received the following ration of luxuries to celebrate the New Year: 100 grammes of ham, an orange, two apples, a handful of nuts, a cigar, half a litre of good wine, and a quarter of a litre of champagne. This good feeding has its natural results upon the physical and moral health of the troops. The men put on flesh on active service.

The stocks of wheat and oats are so large that, in the zone of the armies, the crop of last year has not yet been threshed. For the meat ration, beef alternates with mutton and pork, and fresh meat with frozen. Endless stocks exist. Of the home supply of thirteen million head of cattle, sheep, and pigs, only 800,000 head have been slaughtered.

The summary of the Army supply service gives an idea of the commercial prosperity of the country. The transport of goods by railway and sea proceeds with an activity unknown in the most prosperous times. The ports are crowded with shipping and merchandise. Everywhere it has been necessary to build new docks to deal with the flood of imports of all kinds from abroad. Ports which in time of peace are the least busy are now crammed, and at the great ports, like Havre, ships are obliged to wait for days to unload their cargoes for lack of quay space. Finally, the presence of the British Army in the North of France has brought about an intense activity of trade and an abundant circulation of gold in this part of the country.

IX.—The German Army and its Losses in Men

The military effort of Germany at the outset of the campaign exceeded all anticipations. Her design was to crush the French Army in a few weeks under a tremendous mass of troops. Nothing was neglected to bring that mass together.

The number of German army corps in time of peace is

twenty-five. When war began the German General Staff put in the field on the two theatres of operations :—

1. As fighting troops (Active, Reserve, Ersatz, or Landwehr), 61 army corps.

2. As troops to guard communications and territory, formations of the Landsturm.

In October 6½ new army corps made their appearance, *plus* a division of sailors, in all 7 corps. From the end of November to the end of December there was only an insignificant increase, consisting of one division of sailors. In January 1915, the number of fighting formations put into line by the Germany Army was therefore 69 army corps, divided as follows :—

Active corps, 25½.
Reserve corps, 21½.
Ersatz brigades, 6½.
Reserve corps of new formation, 7½.
Corps of Landwehr, 8½.
Total, 69½.

It is easy to understand the immense effort thus made by Germany if, having regard to the position of Germany at the opening of the war, one considers that of the Allies. Germany desired to take advantage of the circumstances which enabled her to make a simultaneous mobilisation of all her forces, a mobilisation which the three Allied Armies could not carry out as rapidly. Germany wished with the mass of troops to crush first of all the adversary who appeared to her the most immediately dangerous. This effort, broken for the first time on the Marne, attained its maximum at the moment of the Battle of Flanders, in which more than 50 army corps out of 69 were pitted against the French, British, and Belgian Armies. Here also the method followed by Germany is easily comprehensible. At the end of October the Russian danger was beginning to become pressing, and it was necessary to win a decisive victory on the Western theatre of war. It was imperative to give international opinion the impression that Germany remained in that quarter mistress of the operations. Finally, it behoved her by this victory to render possible the transport of a large number of army corps to Poland. We have seen that the

Battle of Flanders, instead of being a success for Germany, was a marked defeat. This defeat was fraught with great results, and it dominates the present position of the German Army.

The plans above described of the German mobilisation, which had their justification in view of a prompt victory, were calculated to become extremely perilous from the moment that that victory failed to be gained. From that moment, in fact, Germany lost the initiative and the direction of the war. And furthermore, she was condemned to suffer the counter-effects of the enormous and precipitate effort which she had made in vain. From the point of view of her effectives and her regimental cadres she had undergone a wastage from which her adversaries, on the other hand, had been able to save themselves.

She had, in the words of the proverb, put all her eggs in one basket, and in spite of her large population she could no longer, owing to the immediate and sterile abuse which she had made of her resources, pretend to regain the superiority of numbers. She was reduced to facing as best she could on both war fronts the unceasingly increasing forces of the Allies. She had attained the maximum of effort and had secured a minimum of results. She has thus landed herself in a difficulty which will henceforward go on increasing, and which is made clear when the wastage which her Army has suffered is closely studied.

The wastage of German effectives is easy to establish. We have for the purpose two sources, the official lists of losses published by the German General Staff, and the note-books, letters, and documents of soldiers and officers killed and taken prisoners. These different documents show that by the middle of January the German losses on the two fronts were 1,800,000 men. These figures are certainly less than the reality because, for one thing, the sick are not comprised, and, for another, the losses in the last battle in Poland are not included.

Let us accept them, however; let us accept also that out of these 1,800,000 men 500,000—this is the normal proportion—have been able to rejoin after being cured. Thus the final loss for five months of the campaign has been 1,300,000 men, or 260,000 men per month. These figures agree exactly

with what can be ascertained when the variations of effectives in certain regiments are examined.

Here also the documents seized permit of the lists of losses being controlled. To cite some examples :—

The 13th Bavarian Regiment, in a month and a half (August-September), lost 3250 men.

The 171st Regiment, from the middle of August to the middle of November, lost 2500 men and 60 officers.

The 99th Regiment in the same period had equal losses.

The 15th Regiment of Infantry on the 18th of October alone lost 1786 men and 37 officers.

The 132nd Regiment lost on November 16, near Ypres, 1390 men.

The losses were still higher in the new formations.

The 205th Regiment had 2400 men put out of action in the one battle of the Yser.

The 235th Regiment lost 1320.

The 244th Regiment, 2150.

The 247th Regiment in that same battle, 1900.

The 248th Regiment, 1800.

The 17th Bavarian Reserve Regiment lost at Messines and Wytschaete 30 officers and 2171 men.

[There follows in the Official Report a very detailed table showing the German losses in a very exact manner as learned from notebooks, letters, statements of prisoners, and official lists, and the conclusion arrived at is as follows :—]

It is, therefore, certain that the majority of the German regiments have had to be completely renewed. What, then, is the situation created by these enormous losses.

The total of German formations known at the beginning of January represented in round numbers four million men. According to the official reports on German recruiting, the entire resources of Germany in men amount to nine millions. But from these nine millions have to be deducted men employed on railways, in the police, and in certain administrations and industries, altogether 500,000 men. The total resources available for the war were therefore 8,500,000. Out of these nearly one-half, say 4,000,000, are now at the front. The definitive losses represent at least 1,300,000 men. The

available resources amounted, then, at the beginning of January to 3,200,000 men.

Of what are these resources composed? Chiefly of men who were untrained in time of peace, the trained reservists having almost all left the depots for the front. It has, moreover, to be noted that out of these 3,200,000 men there are, according to the statistics, 800,000 who are more than thirty-nine years of age, and are therefore of only mediocre military value. Thus there remain 2,400,000. Finally, the category of those untrained in peace comprises, according to the estimates of German military authorities themselves, one-quarter of inefficients. The really available resources capable of campaigning are therefore just two millions. These men, comprising the 1915, 1916, and 1917 classes, called out in anticipation, constitute—and this point cannot be too strongly insisted upon—the total of available resources for the operations during the twelve months of 1915.

As to what the military value of these troops will be, considering the haste with which they have been trained, the formidable losses sustained in the Battle of Flanders by the newly-formed corps show very clearly. Their military value will be limited.

These resources available in the course of 1915 may be divided into three categories, the first available at present, the second to be available in April, and the third between April and December. The resources at present available represent a maximum of 800,000 men, those for April 500,000 men, and the ultimate resources (classes 1916 and 1917 and untrained men of the Landsturm between 30 and 40 years of age) represent 700,000 to 800,000 men. When it is remembered that, according to the German documents themselves, the definitive loss each month is 260,000 men, it is manifest that the available resources for the year 1915 will not suffice to fill the gaps of a war of ten months.

It is, then, superabundantly established that in the matter of effectives Germany has reached the maximum of possible effort. If with the 800,000 men at present available she creates, as it is certain that she is preparing to do at this moment, fresh formations, she will be preventing herself, if the war lasts another ten months, as is possible, from being able to complete afresh her old formations. If she creates

no new formations she will have in 1915 exactly what is necessary, and no more to complete the existing units afresh. Bearing in mind the ways of the German General Staff, one may suppose that, disregarding the eventual impossibility of completing, it is still addressing itself to creating new formations. The weakness to which Germany will expose herself in the matter of effectives has just been set forth, and it is easy to show that this weakness will be still further aggravated by the wastage in the regimental cadres.

X.—The German Losses in Officers, Material and Morale

Beyond all dispute the condition of the cadres in the German Army is bad. The proportion of officers, and notably of officers by profession, has been enormously reduced, and a report made in December showed that in a total of 124 companies, active or reserve, there were only forty-nine officers of the active Army. The active regiments have at the present time an average of twelve professional officers, the reserve regiments nine to ten, the reserve regiments of new formation six to seven, and it is to be remembered that these officers have to be drawn upon afresh for the creation of new units. If Germany creates new army corps, and if the war lasts ten months, she will have to reduce almost to nothing the number of professional officers in each regiment, a number which already is insufficient.

[The French report points out that, on the other hand, all the French regiments have been constantly kept at a minimum figure of eighteen professional officers per regiment. At the same time, it admits that the commanders of German corps, commanders of active battalions, and the officers attached to the commanders of army corps are officers by profession.]

It is easy to ascertain the German losses in artillery. On December 28 the 66th Regiment of artillery entrained at Courtrai for Germany 22 guns, of which 18 were used up. This figure is extremely high for a single regiment. The same facts have been ascertained as regards heavy artillery. On December 21 and 22, 77 guns of heavy artillery, which were no longer serviceable, were sent to Cologne. These movements, which are not isolated facts, show how ill the

German artillery has resisted the ordeal of the campaign. Other proofs, moreover, are decisive. For some weeks we have noted the very peculiar appearance of the marking on the bands of a great number of shells of the '77' gun. When these markings are compared with those of shells fired three months ago, it is plain beyond all question that the barrels are worn and that many of them require to be renewed.

This loss in guns is aggravated by the necessity which has arisen of drawing upon the original army corps for the guns assigned to the recently formed corps or those in course of formation. Several regiments of field artillery have, in fact, had to give up two batteries. These two facts—wearing out of material and drafts upon batteries—will inevitably lead either to the reduction of batteries from six to four guns, or to a reduction of the number of batteries in the army corps, or to the partial substitution for '77' guns of nine centimetre cannon of the old pattern, the presence of which has been many times observed at the front.

Furthermore, the German artillery lacks, and has lacked, munitions for a very long time. It has been obliged to reduce its consumption of shells in a notable degree. No doubt is possible in this respect. The statements of prisoners since the Battle of the Marne, and still more since the Battle of the Yser, make it clear that the number of shots allowed to the batteries for each action is strictly limited. We have found on officers killed or taken prisoners the actual orders prescribing positively a strict economy of munitions.

For the last three months, too, we notice that the quality of the projectiles is mediocre. Many of them do not burst. On January 7, in the course of a bombardment of Laventie, scarcely any of the German shells burst. The proportion of shells failing to burst was estimated at two-fifths by the British on December 14; two-thirds by the Belgians at Furnes in January; and at two-thirds by ourselves in the same month. On January 3 at Bourg-et-Comin, shrapnel fell, of which the explosion scarcely broke the envelope, the bullets being projected without any force. The same thing has occurred since then in other places. About the same time our 14th Army Corps was fired at with shrapnel loaded with fragments of glass, and on several points of our front shell casings or shells of very bad quality have been found,

denoting hasty manufacture and the use of material taken at hazard.

From numerous indications it appears that the Germans are beginning to run short of their 1898 pattern rifle. A certain number of the last reinforcements (January) are armed with carbines or rifles of a poor sort without bayonets. Others have not even rifles. Prisoners taken in the Woëvre had old-pattern weapons.

The upshot of these observations is that Germany, despite her large stores at the beginning and the great resources of her industrial production, presents manifest signs of wear, and that the official optimism which she displays does not correspond with the reality of the facts.

The material wastage of the German Army has corresponded with a decline in the morale, which it is possible to follow both through the interrogation of prisoners and the pocket-books and letters seized upon them or on the killed.

At the beginning of the war the entire German Army, as was natural, was animated by an unshakable faith in the military superiority of the Empire. It lived on the recollections of 1870 and on those of the long years of peace, during which all the Powers which had to do with Germany displayed towards her a spirit of conciliation and patience which might pass for weakness. The first prisoners we took in August showed themselves wholly indifferent to the reverses of the German Army. They were sincerely and profoundly convinced that if the German Army retired it was in virtue of a preconceived plan, and that our successes would lead to nothing.

The events at the end of August were calculated to strengthen this conviction in the mind of the German soldiers. The strategic retreat of the French Army, the facility with which the German Armies were able to advance from August 24 to September 5, gave our adversaries a feeling of absolute and final superiority, which manifested itself at that time in all the statements obtained and all the documents seized.

At the moment of the Battle of the Marne, the first impression was one of failure of comprehension and of stupor. A great number of German soldiers, especially those who fell into our hands during the first days of that battle, believed

fully, as at the end of August, that the retreat which they were ordered to make was only a means of luring us into a trap. German military opinion was suddenly converted when the soldiers saw that this retreat continued and that it was being carried out in disorder, under conditions which left no doubt as to its cause and to its extent. This really spelled defeat, and a defeat aggravated by the absence of regular supplies and by the physical and moral depression which was the result.

The severity of the losses sustained and the overpowering effects of the French artillery began from this moment to be noted in German pocket-books with veritable terror. Hope revived, however, at the end of some weeks, and there is to be found in the letters of soldiers and officers at that date the announcement of 'a great movement' which is being prepared, and which is to lead the German Armies anew as far as Paris. This is the great 'Battle of Calais,' which, contrary to anticipations of the enemy, was in reality fought to the east of the Yser.

The losses of the Germans, which during those ten days exceeded 150,000 men, and may perhaps have reached 200,000, produced a terrifying impression on the troops. From that moment prisoners no longer declared themselves sure of success. For a certain time they had been consoled by the announcement of the capture of Warsaw. This pretended success having proved to be fictitious, incredulity became general. During the last two months the most intelligent of the prisoners have all admitted that no one could any longer say on which side victory would rest. If we think of the absolute confidence with which the German people had been sustained, this avowal is of great importance.

Letters found on a dead officer speak of the imminence of a military and economic hemming-in of Germany. It discusses the possibility of Germany finding herself after the war with 'empty hands and pockets turned inside out.' There is no longer any question of imposing the conqueror's law upon adversaries at his mercy, but of fighting with the energy of despair to secure an honourable peace. An officer of the General Staff, who was made prisoner on January 18, said: 'Perhaps this struggle of despair has already begun.'

This change of feeling is all the more remarkable inasmuch as the German Government from the beginning of the war made a sustained effort to create in the Army an artificial state of mind based entirely upon lies. We have often found, either by the interrogation of prisoners or the examination of papers found on the dead, that a scientific system of fables for the use of soldiers was in use for the six months in the ranks of the German Army. Whenever the Germans were beaten, their soldiers were induced to believe that it was because they wished to be so. As regards the Battle of Flanders, the orders of the commanders and the articles of German newspapers leave no doubt about the importance of the offensive plan which broke itself against our resistance. But the thing went further. We frequently had the opportunity of ascertaining how the German commanding officers applied themselves to deceiving their men even in matters of detail. The prisoners whom we captured to the north, to the east, and to the south of Ypres, often declared with evident good faith that Paris was a few kilometres behind the hills which bounded the horizon. Others, better instructed in geography, told us with perfect seriousness that the German Army had vacated Paris because cholera and plague had broken out there, and the doctors had ordered this hotbed of contagion to be avoided. We have found prisoners in possession of postcards in German entitled, 'Souvenir of the capture of Warsaw.' On the other hand, the Russians found postcards entitled, 'Souvenir of the capture of Calais.'

Thus an artificial opinion was kept up which is beginning to be shaken. However docile and disciplined the Germans may be, one cannot help thinking that on the day when they perceive that they have been systematically and abominably deceived, a reaction will set in, of which the victims will be those very men who organised this attempt to dupe several millions of men.

XI.—German Lack of Supplies

The chief explanation of the imperfections noted in the German projectiles is to be found in the bad quality of the primary material. In spite of her enormous supplies, Ger-

many has already suffered, and will suffer more and more, from the impossibility of replenishing by sea. This impossibility weighs heavily on military manufacture. On this point, an extract from the following report, made at the beginning of December, by a high American official, will be read with interest :—

Everybody recognises that there is in Germany a terrible scarcity of rubber. It cannot be procured, and there was no great provision of it in the country when war broke out. There were scarcely any private motor-cars running in Berlin when I left that city. The owners of cars who had not supplied themselves with rubber before the war can scarcely get any now. The sale of rubber has been prohibited in every form. Even india-rubber balls such as children play with have been withdrawn from sale. Still more serious is the scarcity of copper, which is indispensable for the manufacture of shells and munitions. The Germans are greatly alarmed by the fact that it is impossible for them to replenish their supply of this precious material. They really do not know how things will turn out for them. I have also every reason to believe that the question of powder is causing the General Staff the gravest anxiety. There is a want of saltpetre and of the nitrates necessary for its manufacture. Direct answers to all questions on this subject are carefully avoided, and people prefer to get round them by an evasive phrase. When you ask them why they are employing old munitions they answer, ' We want to get rid of them.'

It is in no way my intention to deny the existence of reserves, which are still immense, of munitions in the country. I only wish to say that my personal inquiries have convinced me that it is impossible for Germany, on the ground alone of the munitions, even if the consumption is far below the present consumption, to continue the war beyond June next. I am convinced that the most vital considerations of the present conflict relate to the scarcity of copper and gunpowder in Germany, as well as of the different materials required for the manufacture of the diverse explosives now in use. At the bottom of their hearts German official circles fully understand that there can be only one issue of the present struggle in Europe. They know in reality that they are beaten. They are fighting to obtain the best conditions possible.

The lack of food is also beginning to make itself felt, as is shown by the creation of a monopoly and distribution by rations of cereals, ordered by the Federal Council on January 27. This is a measure without precedent, except in the history of besieged places. It is, moreover, easy to

show by some figures what effects the war is having upon German supplies :—

	German Production.	Consumption before the War.
	Tons.	Tons.
Saltpetre . .	Nil	785,000
Rubber . .	Nil	224,000
Petroleum . .	125,000	1,000,000
Copper . .	37,000	224,000

If one takes the figures of German imports in 1912 it is observed that they amounted to 10½ milliards of marks (£750,000,000), of which less than 2½ milliards (£125,000,000) came from countries with which Germany can still trade. Thus Germany is deprived by the war of four-fifths of her imports.

German economists have always pointed out this peril, and certain of them recognise it to-day. Below are some quotations from the German Press, made both before and after the outbreak of war :—

In the hypothesis of a war in which the importation of articles of food to Germany is cut off, our position would be critical. The success of our arms, even great successes, would be of no avail, or could only be inadequately turned to account, if the enemy succeeds in imposing upon us new tactics : the tactics of hunger. (Schmoller's *Jahrbücher*, 1912, pp. 590-591.)

If the war lasts more than eight months we shall have no more corn. (Georg Helm, *Frankfurter Zeitung*, October 20, 1914.)

The stock of articles of food is less this year, the year of war, than the stock in time of peace. If we preserve the habits of peace time this stock may be insufficient to allow us to wait for the harvest. (Professor Schumacher, Bonn, *Cologne Gazette*, November 3, 1914.)

If the war last for a long time, and that is now certain, our situation will become difficult and very critical. We must make up our mind before it is too late to take measures. (*Deutsche Tageszeitung*, organ of the League of Farmers, quoted by the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, October 17, 1914.)

Better to be hungry than to die of hunger. (Professor Levy, *Berliner Tageblatt*, quoted by *Frankfurter Zeitung*, September 20, 1914.)

It has, furthermore, been observed on several occasions since the outbreak of hostilities that the revictualling of the German Army has not been as regular as that of the French. In the course of the Battle of the Marne and in the weeks which followed our victory the German prisoners were famished. They threw themselves voraciously on the bread which was given them, and all declared that they had eaten nothing for several days. It seems that the German supply service was not capable of coping with the consequences, which, nevertheless, could easily have been foreseen, of the destruction of railways by the French military authorities. Owing to this destruction, which was methodically planned and carried out, the bulk, one may even say the whole, of the German forces operating in France was, except on the two wings, deprived of all supplies by railway. The insufficiency of motor transport aggravated this condition of things, and for a fortnight the troops were in want of everything. The same irregularity in the matter of reprovisioning was observed during the Battle of Flanders. Moreover, the loaves which we often find in the German trenches are of a more than mediocre quality. The prisoners consider the white bread of the French troops a treat. The German Army in the field lives chiefly on preserved food. It lacks both wine and beer. The situation of the country explains this state of affairs. The hour of famine will sound for Germany before the end of 1915. We have already seen that the Government has taken the first measures by which an unequal contest against scarcity is proclaimed.

Comparable with the methods above recounted are the official *communiqués* with which the German General Staff endeavours to extend to neutral Powers the illusion which it endeavours to create in the ranks of its own Army. As events have proved many times, there is ground for disbelieving these *communiqués*. A recent example is to be found in the affair of Soissons. This local success, which was due to the rise of the Aisne and the breaking down of bridges, was officially announced as a decisive victory, whereas since January 15, the Germans at this point have not even dared to attack.

XII.—Conclusions and the Future

[Having finished his survey of the operations from the beginning of August to the end of January, having described in detail the present splendid condition of the French Army, and having criticised the conditions in the German Army, the writer of the Official Review proceeds in conclusion to consider :—

1. The significance of the German defeat ;
2. The significance of the French success ;
3. The three points of French superiority ; and
4. The offensive faith of the French Army.]

1. *The Significance of the German Failure*

Of the events of which an abridged recital has now been completed, it remains to draw the conclusion, to appraise the results of these six months of war and to define the possibilities which those results have in store for us in the further operations.

It may first of all be affirmed that the fundamental plan of the German General Staff has completely failed. This plan has been superabundantly set forth by German military writers, as also in the Reichstag by the Ministers of War. It aimed at crushing France by an overwhelming attack, and at reducing her to a condition of helplessness in less than a month. Germany has not succeeded in this. Our Army is, as we have seen, not only intact, but strengthened, full of trust in its leaders, and profoundly penetrated with the certainty of final success. Germany has not attained, then, the essential object which is publicly set before it. But the defeat which she has sustained does not apply only to her fundamental plan. It extends also to the various operations which she has essayed to secure partial advantages over us in default of the decisive advantage in which she had failed. In the three days which followed the declaration of war the German General Staff massed great forces in front of Nancy. With what purpose ? A sudden attack which from its very beginning should break our lines. This attack did not take place, because the reinforcements of our frontier force at the end of 1913 and the defensive organisation established on the

Grand Couronné discouraged the enemy from an enterprise which, though possible a year sooner, had become full of risk.

Being unable to strike at Nancy, the German Command directed all its resources to the outflanking manœuvre which, by enveloping our left, would permit of the investment of Paris. Our left was not enveloped. Paris was not invested. And the German Army was obliged in the second week of September to save its own threatened communications by a precipitate retreat.

With a desperate effort the General Staff of the enemy attempted to off-set the effect of this retreat by piercing our centre in Champagne. There, as elsewhere, he failed, and had to withdraw in great haste. In the month of October, with more extended lines, he endeavoured to repeat his enveloping manœuvre and to turn our left ; but right up to the North Sea we built up an impassable barrier for him. He accumulated his forces in Belgium to outflank us by the coast and reach our maritime bases. His attack was broken. With desperation he sought to cut our forces to the south of Ypres ; we maintained all our positions.

To sum up, the German General Staff has placed upon its record since the beginning of the campaign, apart from the failure of its general plan, which aimed at the crushing of France in a few weeks, seven defeats of high significance—namely, defeat of the sudden attack on Nancy, defeat of the rapid march on Paris, defeat of the envelopment of our left in August, defeat of the same envelopment in November, defeat of the attempt to break through our centre in September, defeat of the coast attack on Dunkirk and Calais, and the defeat of the attack on Ypres.

The German Army, powerful and courageous as it may be, has therefore not succeeded in gaining the advantage at any single point, and its forced halt after six months of war condemns it to a retreat the pace of which may be accelerated by the Russian successes, but the necessity of which is now a foregone conclusion independently of those successes.

2. *The Significance of the French Success*

Against the extent of the German failure has to be placed that of the French success. All that our enemies have failed

to gain we have gained, and first and foremost confidence in ourselves. It is certain, and it could not be otherwise, that at the outset our troops and the country itself still remained under the impression of the defeats of 1870. The victory of the Marne, confirmed by the victory of Flanders, the impassable barrier set up against the most formidable effort which has ever been attempted in the military history of the world, have created a feeling of security which grows stronger every day. Every one is aware, in fact, that, in order to gain the day against the coalition which encloses her, Germany needed a rapid success. Lacking this rapid success, her defeat is certain. For three months the German Press has been seeking to find favourable arguments, out of the small amount of change that the western front has undergone, on which to base the statement that the situation is finally crystallised. This is merely a sophism, which it is easy to expose. In the first place, even admitting the German thesis, Germany would none the less be condemned—condemned to die of hunger. But this thesis cannot be admitted because, if for the last three months the French Command has not engaged in a general offensive, it has had three decisive reasons for this. The first is that, having time on its side, it intends to make its effort only after it has assembled all the means upon which it can, in the near future, rely with absolute certainty. The second is that, taught by the example of the Germans at Ypres, it has realised what may be the price of an offensive, vigorous indeed, but insufficiently prepared. The third is that the weather has been almost incessantly bad, and that it is useless to engage in great operations in water, mud, and fog, and in a season of short days.

We have seen that the French Army is strengthening itself every day in heavy artillery, in explosive weapons for the trenches, and in projectiles. It is known that the British Army in France, which at first consisted of four divisions, has been heavily reinforced. It is known also that the number of troops now with the colours and being trained in England is very large. It is known that the Belgian Army, which is reconstituting itself, will shortly have six divisions of infantry and two divisions of cavalry. It is known that the Serbian Army, supplied afresh with material and muni-

tions, is once again prepared to show its splendid qualities. It is known, finally, that Russia continues to draw upon the immense reservoir of her recruits, having up to the present utilised only the twentieth part.

These are the reasons why the French Command has not hurried and awaits the hour which it considers favourable, and these reasons, being based on precise and easily tested motives, are irrefutable.

3. *The Three Points of French Superiority*

If, then, we turn to the future we note that :—

(1) The wastage of the German Army is in all respects greater than that of the French Army. The principal cause of this is the superiority of our artillery and the fighting methods of the German infantry, which attacks in closer formation than does ours. It is now certain that the losses of our adversaries are double ours.

(2) The possibilities of the German Army from the point of view of effectives will go on decreasing more and more. The German population capable of bearing arms is, in comparison with the French population, in the proportion of three to two. Now at the present time, Landsturm included, Germany is employing on the French front a number of men representing two-thirds of her resources against one-third on the Russian front. On account of the Austrian defeats Germany will be obliged to strengthen her forces against Russia more and more. The number of troops opposed to France will therefore continually decrease. Our position will be improved by this circumstance, as also by the number of German losses, which will always remain larger than ours, and finally, by the large reinforcements which the British will send to the Continent.

(3) The capacities of the German Army in the matter of regimental organisation, already inferior to ours, are becoming so still more. Granted that our adversaries at the beginning of the war had more cadres than ourselves. The text-books show that their superiority in this respect was considerably less than their superiority in men. It was not as much as three to two. Now it is an established fact that the German losses in officers are greater than ours. We shall therefore

certainly gain the advantage from this point of view, if, indeed, we have not got it already.

4. *The Offensive Faith of the French Army*

Out of all these elements has been born the offensive faith of the French Army and its leaders. We have before us two systems. The one, the German system, demanded a rapid success at the opening of the campaign, a success against France before the Russians could come upon the field, before the British reserves could intervene, before the economic trouble could make itself felt. Hence the creation in all haste of new corps, whether or not they could be kept up for a long time. It was an article of faith that the victory was to be immediate. This immediate victory the Germans did not win.

The other system, the French system, consists, with the advantage of the freedom of the seas, in maintaining in good and complete form a number of sufficient formations, and in creating new ones only in the measure in which they can with certainty be kept up and suitably and durably equipped with regimental organisation. This system is established with a view to a prolonged war.

Of these two systems, which, after six months of trial, shall triumph ? To put the question is to answer it. The Germans can no longer oppose us with forces superior to ours. They will therefore not be able to do in the future what they could not do in the past when they were one-third more numerous than ourselves.

Consequently our final victory must follow by the imperious necessity of the concordant force of facts and figures. Our effort, too, is from now onwards directed towards that offensive which we shall take at our own good time, and the issue of which cannot be doubtful. Our reinforcements are being trained in the instruction camps with a view to that offensive. It is in view of the offensive that, from day to day, our stores of munitions, food, and transport are being increased. It is in view of the offensive that important reserves of telegraphic, telephonic, railway, and shipping material have been constituted. It is in view of the offensive that preparation has been made for the reoccupation of the

railway systems of Belgium, Luxemburg, and Alsace-Lorraine, and that a military commission, English, French, and Belgian, is preparing to work them. It is in view of the offensive that, to our ten thousand heavy lorries, we have added, with the powerful aid of our automobile industry, more than four thousand new transport wagons since the beginning of the war. Against all this, which on our side is sure and available, Germany can offer nothing either equivalent or analogous.

The large resources in men, officers, material, and munitions which she had at her disposal six months ago have been largely expended in the hope of crushing, under the effort of mass and the effect of surprise, the forces opposed to them.

To-day they are scarcely sufficient, after the defeat of that attempt, to offer even *defensive* resistance. The military wastage goes on progressively at the same time as the economic wastage, and the moral wastage which is the consequence of both. The creation of new units can have no other object than to re-establish the equilibrium of the balance of numbers which leans more and more to the side of the Allies. Every further development given to the order of battle will result in a diminution of the general value of the German Armies and accelerate their wastage. It will also bring nearer the moment when Germany will be at the end of her military resources and incapable of ever again regaining her numerical superiority.

At that moment France, taken by surprise in August by a premeditated act of aggression, will begin the war in very truth and in the fulness of her strength.

BELGIAN OFFICIAL REPORTS

THE MILITARY OPERATIONS OF BELGIUM IN DEFENCE OF THE COUNTRY AND TO UPHOLD HER NEUTRALITY

REPORT COMPILED BY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE BELGIAN ARMY FOR THE PERIOD JULY 31 TO DECEMBER 31, 1914[1]

PRELIMINARIES

The first military measure adopted by Belgium in consequence of the diplomatic conflict which divided Europe in July 1914, was to place her army on a reinforced peace footing, by calling up three classes of the men liable to military service. This was merely a measure of precaution. Owing to the neutrality of Belgium, the dispositions which she might be called on to adopt were essentially protective, and only intended to meet possible eventualities.

The Belgian Army, on its ordinary peace footing, consisted of only one class with the colours. Such a force was obviously inadequate at a moment of international political tension. Belgium, owing to its small area, is in reality nothing more, in a military sense, than a frontier zone, and the covering troops which the neighbouring Great Powers had assembled in their frontier zones had a considerably higher peace strength. The raising of the Belgian Army Divisions to the reinforced peace strength only placed her on an equality, in this respect, with her neighbours.

But the Belgian forces fell far short, both in men and in guns, of the figures contemplated in the recent reorganisation of the Army, which had only just been commenced, and which had been intended to provide a total of 350,000 men. As this figure would only be reached in 1918, the Belgian

[1] [Published in 1915: Paris, Librairie Chapelot; London, W. H. and L. Collingridge.]

Government had so arranged its scheme that, even during the transition period, the Army could at any moment be mobilised and assembled without difficulty. As regards equipment, heavy artillery was entirely lacking ; the country was at the moment in the throes of far-reaching military changes.

Two days later, on the 31st July, at 7 P.M., owing to the exceptional gravity which the situation had assumed, mobilisation was ordered by Royal Decree.

In time of peace the headquarters and garrisons of the six Army Divisions and of the Cavalry Division, of which the Field Army was composed, were distributed as follows :

1st Division : Ghent (garrisons of Ghent, Bruges, Ostend, and Ypres).
2nd Division : Antwerp (garrison of Antwerp).
3rd Division : Liège (garrisons of Liège, Hasselt, and Verviers).
4th Division : Namur (garrisons of Namur and Charleroi).
5th Division : Mons (garrisons of Mons, Tournai, and Ath).
6th Division : Brussels (garrison of Brussels).
The Cavalry Division had its headquarters at Brussels.

The concentration areas had been selected in accordance with defensive requirements, and with a strict observance of the obligations imposed on Belgium by her neutrality, as defined by the treaties of 1839.

The 1st, 3rd, 4th, and 5th Divisions acted as advanced-guard divisions, and were stationed respectively in each of the regions through which danger might threaten Belgium, thus :— the 1st, or Flanders, Division faced England ; the 3rd, or Liège, Division faced Germany ; the 4th and 5th Divisions faced France ; the 4th being placed so as to meet a possible attack on Namur, the 5th to oppose an advance from the direction of Maubeuge-Lille. Each of these advanced-guard divisions was intended to offer the first resistance to attack, and thus to gain time for the transfer of the five other divisions to the threatened portion of the territory.

The defensive system of Belgium further included three fortified places : Antwerp, forming an entrenched camp and place of refuge ; Liège and Namur, designed to oppose the enemy's advance, and to act as bridge-heads and points of

support. It was thus necessary to divide the army into fortress troops and field army ; of the fifteen classes called to the colours, the seven oldest were allotted to the service of the fortresses, while the eight youngest were assigned to the field army.

The sole object of all these measures, as the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the 1st August informed the King's representatives at the foreign capitals, was ' to enable Belgium to fulfil her international obligations ; they could not possibly have been inspired by a feeling of defiance towards any of the Powers.'

On the 2nd August, at 7 P.M., while mobilisation was in progress, the German Minister at Brussels handed to the Belgian Government a note,[1] which the latter was given twelve hours to answer. From the military point of view, this document contained two noteworthy paragraphs :—1. The German Government was stated to have received reliable information to the effect that French troops intended to march on the Meuse by Givet and Namur. 2. In order to forestall this expected attack which threatened the safety of the Empire, the German Government proposed to send its troops across Belgian territory, and requested Belgium not to oppose their passage, and especially to refrain from organising resistance at the Meuse fortresses, and from destroying the roads, railways, tunnels or bridges.

It must be remarked that the Note had no immediate influence on the concentration of the Army, which remained distributed in accordance with the military exigencies dictated by the neutrality of the country. The troops occupying posts on all the frontiers received orders to open fire on any foreign detachment which might set foot on Belgian soil.

This attitude on the part of the military authorities faithfully reflected the political attitude taken up by the King's Government, which had replied to the German Note[2] that, on the one hand, ' it would oppose with all the means at its disposal any attempt made by Germany to infringe the rights of Belgium ' ; and that, on the other hand, ' if, contrary to all expectations, a violation of Belgian neutrality were committed by France, Belgium would fulfil all her international obligations, and her Army would oppose the most vigorous resistance to the invader.' At the same time, Belgium had

declined the military aid which the Minister of France had offered, on the grounds that the Government had not yet appealed to the guarantee of the Powers, and reserved to itself the right to decide on its course of action later.

During the night of 3rd to 4th August it became certain that the German troops intended to force a passage through Belgium. Measures were promptly taken at Headquarters to deal with the new situation. Orders were issued for the destruction of the railways, tunnels, bridges, etc., on the lines of approach likely to be used by the German troops. The Military Governors of the several provinces were instructed no longer to consider any movements of French troops on Belgian soil as acts of violation of neutrality.

In accordance with the scheme of defence, the 3rd Division was to resist the enemy, supported by the fortified position of Liège ; covered by it, the remaining Divisions were to advance against the invader, with the exception, however, of the 4th Division, whose task was to defend Namur. The 1st Division was sent from Ghent to Tirlemont, the 2nd from Antwerp to Louvain, the 5th from Mons to Perwez, and the 6th from Brussels to Wavre. These movements were to be covered : firstly, by the Cavalry Division which, after concentrating at Gembloux, was ordered to Waremme ; secondly, by a mixed brigade of the 3rd Division sent to Tongres, and thirdly, by a mixed brigade of the 4th Division which was moved to Huy.

The movements of concentration, begun on the 4th August, were completed next day ; they were carried out with rapidity and regularity, partly by road, partly by rail. The King, in virtue of the Constitution, assumed the supreme command of the Army.

On the morning of August 6 the Army was ready to move. Each of the Field Army Divisions at that moment constituted a complete unit, provided with all its administrative services, and comprising either three or four mixed brigades, one regiment of divisional cavalry, one regiment of divisional artillery, one battalion of engineers (two companies), one section of field telegraphists, and one divisional transport corps. Each mixed brigade consisted of two regiments of three battalions, one group of three field batteries, one machine-gun company and a detachment of gendarmerie. Finally, the

Cavalry Division had two brigades, one cyclist battalion, one artillery group of three batteries, one cyclist pioneer and pontoon company, and one divisional transport corps. The total strength of the Field Army amounted to 117,000 men. It was subsequently increased by 18,500 volunteers posted to the Field Army.

As soon as the concentration had taken place it was possible to organise the defence of the territory.

See *Diplomatic*, p. 43]

In the appeal addressed by Belgium on the 4th August,[1] after the violation of her frontier, to the Powers which had guaranteed her neutrality, she had declared in what manner she intended to defend her territory. 'There should be,' said the Government of the King in this appeal, 'operations in combination and in junction with the armies of the Guaranteeing Powers designed to resist the forcible measures employed by Germany against Belgium, and at the same time to guarantee the maintenance of Belgian independence and integrity in the future. Belgium is glad to be able to declare that she will provide for the defence of her fortified places.'

From the German Note of August 2 it was easy to infer that if the German armies passed through the country, the Meuse would be, not the northern limit, but the axis, of their offensive movement towards France, so that evidently forces very superior in numbers to the Belgian Army were about to cross Belgium.

Hence the following principles were laid down for the conduct of operations :

I.—In case the Army should be faced by very superior forces :

1. To remain as far forward as possible on good defensive positions, barring the passage of the invaders, so as to protect as much as possible of the country from invasion.

2. The Army thus forming the advanced guard of the French and British Armies, was to wait in these positions till the junction with those Armies could be effected.

3. Should this junction not have been effected before the arrival of the enemy's main bodies, the Army was not to be exposed to certain defeat, which would necessarily involve the occupation of the territory, and therefore :

(*a*) The Army unsupported was not to engage the mass of the enemy's troops in battle ;

(*b*) The Army was not to allow itself to be surrounded, but was, on the contrary, to manœuvre in such a manner as to keep a line of retreat open with a view to an ultimate junction with the French and British forces, for joint action with these latter.

II.—In case the Army be faced by forces no more than equal to its own :

The enemy was to be attacked at the most favourable moment, either if his positions were too extended and not sufficiently prepared for defence, or if his strength had been reduced momentarily.

Further, the fortified positions of Liège and Namur, as well as the entrenched camp of Antwerp, were to be defended in any case.

When, on the 6th August, the Field Army had been concentrated, and the Headquarters Staff was in a position to apply the above principles, the general situation had already been seriously affected by military events which had occurred on the Meuse and in front of Liège.

Defence of Liège

On the morning of the 4th August, two divisions of German cavalry (2nd and 4th Divisions, consisting of about twelve regiments) had crossed the frontier and invaded the district of Herve. Passing to the north of the fortified position of Liège, they pushed on towards the Meuse. At Visé they found the bridge destroyed and the passages of the river guarded by the 2nd battalion of the 12th Regiment of the Line. This battalion resisted attacks made by very superior forces, supported by artillery fire and by infantry transported in motor cars. But the enemy extended his movement towards the north ; two Hussar regiments crossed the Meuse at the Lixhe ford. The Belgian forces, their left wing having been turned, retired on to the line of the Liège forts.

Behind the cavalry, German troops of all arms, belonging to the 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, and 11th Army Corps, entered Belgium ; the heads of their columns reached the line Bombaye-Herve-Remouchamps on the afternoon of the 4th ;

while still farther in rear the concentration of the 3rd and 4th Army Corps was reported at St. Vith and to the north of that place (nine miles south of Malmédy). At that moment seven army corps, or about 300,000 men, were collecting thus on the invasion roads, which were blocked by the fortified position of Liège.

On the 5th August a bridge was thrown over the river at Lixhe, and advanced cavalry units began to appear at Tongres. At the same time a German cavalry regiment came in contact at Plainevaux, south of Liège, with a squadron of the 2nd Lancers, which charged it, and lost three-quarters of its strength in the unequal encounter. In the course of the morning the bearer of a flag of truce appeared before the Governor of Liège, and summoned him to allow the German Army to pass. On the peremptory refusal of the Governor, the German corps proceeded to assault Forts Chaudfontaine, Fléron, Evegnée, Barchon, and Pontisse. Although the attack was supported by powerful heavy artillery, it was everywhere repulsed with great loss. The fiercest fighting took place between Fort Barchon and the Meuse. At this point the enemy had succeeded in penetrating the line; a vigorous counter-attack by the 11th Brigade checked his advance and threw him back in disorder beyond his original positions. The attack on the section of the Meuse below its junction with the Vesdre had failed.

The section Ourthe-Meuse was then violently attacked by fresh troops during the night of the 5th to 6th August. At the same time a small party of the enemy's cavalry, consisting of two officers and eight men, made a desperate attempt in Liège itself against the person of the Governor of the fortress; the plot failed, and all who took part in it were killed.

Between the Ourthe and the Meuse, the attacks of the 10th German Corps forced the defenders of the intervals between the forts to retire. The available troops of the 12th, 9th, and 15th Brigades (the latter belonging to the 4th Army Division and sent from Huy) checked these attacks by means of counter-attacks.

Since the 4th August the troops of the 3rd Division had been engaged at all the points, successively, of a very extended front, repelling the desperate onslaughts of an enemy four times their superior in numbers, and they were in danger of

being surrounded. They had, therefore, to be withdrawn to join the main body of the Army, which by that time had completed its concentration. The forts continued to be held by their garrisons, but the Governor of Liège considered that they could now only play the part of isolated forts. He retained the general military command, and established himself at Fort Loncin at noon on the 6th August. The field troops assembled between Forts Loncin and Hollogne, and reached the Geer on the same evening ; they then joined the main army on the Gette, the operation being uninterfered with by the enemy, of whom only a few Lancer patrols were encountered.

On the occasion of the arrival of the Liège troops on the main position of defence, the King issued a General Order, in which he said :

'In the name of the Nation, I salute you, officers and soldiers of the 3rd Division and of the 15th mixed Brigade ! You have performed your duty, and you have done honour to our Army, and have shown the enemy what it costs to attack unjustly a people which, though peace-loving, draws from the justice of its cause an invincible strength. Your country has reason to be proud of you !

'Soldiers of the Belgian Army, do not forget that you are the advanced guard of huge armies which are taking part in this gigantic struggle, and that we are only waiting for the arrival of our brothers-in-arms to march to victory.

'ALBERT.'

For several days after the departure of the 3rd Division, the forts continued to fire on any German troops who came within their radius of action. On the 12th August, however, at about noon, the bombardment by artillery of large calibre began against the defences, those on the right bank being the first to receive attention. The last of the forts fell on the 16th and 17th August.

OPERATIONS IN COMBINATION WITH THE ARMIES OF THE GUARANTEEING POWERS, 6TH TO 20TH AUGUST

Let us glance at the general situation at the moment when, on the 6th August, the concentration of the Army

in the quadrilateral Tirlemont-Louvain-Wavre-Perwez, two marches distant from Liège, enabled the Army Command to decide on the plan of defence.

The 3rd Division, after defending Liège, was retreating on to the main body. The enemy had crossed the Meuse to the north of Visé, and had attacked the Liège position with three army corps ; other corps were assembling to the east and south-east of Liège. Thus the enemy was in possession of the line of the Meuse towards Liège, and he had, in the immediate vicinity, forces greatly superior to those which could be brought against him. Behind Liège, the first natural defensive line which the Belgian Army could occupy was that of the Gette, prolonged by the course of the Meuse between Namur and Givet. This line of defence, with its left resting upon the Démer, protects a great portion of the Belgian territory, and bars the road to a German offensive such as that which seemed to be taking shape.

The Belgian Army was not strong enough numerically to occupy the whole of this line, and it was decided to hold only the course of the Gette and Namur. In this position it would be able to wait for the arrival of the French and British Armies, if they could arrive in time, to occupy the space between the Gette and Namur and also the line of the Meuse above Namur. Lastly, massed along the line of the Gette, the Army, while covering the capital of the country—Brussels —was not threatened with being cut off from Antwerp, its base of operations. This latter circumstance was of vital importance, since the Belgian Army could on no account risk being cut off from its base, where all its resources in provisions, munitions, and supplies of all kinds were collected, and where the Government would have to retire to in case of need. All these reasons decided the Army Command to keep the Army in observation on the Gette, to entrench there, and to wait on that line until the junction with the French and British forces should ultimately be effected.

The left of the Army was to the north-west of Tirlemont, the right at Jodoigne. In first line were the 1st and 5th Army Divisions, and in second line the 2nd Division, at Louvain, and the 6th at Hamme-Mille. When the 3rd Division joined the main body from Liège, it was placed in the first line between the 1st and 5th Divisions. The front of these forces

was covered by the Cavalry Division, which, originally at Waremme, had been moved first to St. Trond, and then to the left of the Army prolonging the line of the latter from north of Tirlemont nearly to Diest. The 4th Division remained in the fortified position of Namur, not only with a view to the defence of that place, but to hold it as a point of support for the line Gette-Meuse. Lastly, the Liège forts were still occupied by their garrisons, while at Huy there was the 8th mixed Brigade, detached from the 4th Division to replace the 15th Brigade, which had been sent to Liège.

About the 10th August, there were in front of the Belgian lines bodies of German cavalry supported by battalions of rifles. Skirmishes took place daily with the Belgian advanced parties, and when the enemy became particularly active towards Hasselt and towards Diest, the Belgian Cavalry Division came in contact with these troops near Budingen and Haelen.

On the 12th August, the enemy's cavalry tried to force the passage of the Gette at Haelen. Six regiments belonging to the 2nd and 4th Cavalry Divisions, supported by the 7th and 9th Rifle Battalions and by three batteries, took part in this operation. Against these 4000 sabres, 2000 rifles, and 18 guns, the Belgian Cavalry Division could only oppose 2400 sabres, 410 cyclists, and 12 guns.

The enemy attacked at about 8.30 A.M., employing dismounted cavalry in some force, as well as riflemen. For nearly two hours the 3rd company of Carbineer Cyclists held them in check, supported at about 9.30 by the 1st company posted to the south of the village. But at about ten o'clock the German artillery came into action, and its fire soon rendered the outskirts of Haelen untenable, while the enemy was continually reinforced. The Carbineer Cyclists, after blowing up the bridge, retired on to the railway line, where they continued the action until noon. At that moment four squadrons (two of the 4th Regiment of Lancers and two of the 5th) were deployed, in rear of the 1st and 3rd companies of Carbineer Cyclists, about the farm of Yserbeek ; on their left was the 1st Horse Artillery battery, escorted by two squadrons of the 5th Lancers, the two other batteries being in echelon north-east of Houtsem. The flanks were protected at Zelck by a squadron of the 4th Lancers and two platoons

of cyclists, and at Velpen by two squadrons of the 2nd Guides ; three squadrons of the 1st Guides were in reserve at the edge of the Blekkom woods.

At noon the enemy attacked simultaneously Zelck and the railway station at Haelen. He was driven back at Zelck, and came under artillery and machine-gun fire at Haelen. He then brought up fresh troops and threatened to turn the cyclists, who thereupon retired slowly towards the farm of Yserbeek. It was about 1 P.M. when an attack was launched against the cyclists ; dense lines of riflemen debouched from Haelen ; the cyclists, who had been fighting for nearly five hours, fell back. Immediately a squadron of dragoons appeared and charged them ; it was destroyed by rifle fire. The charge was repeated twice, and each time met with the same fate. The enemy then put in his reserves, which deployed on the front Velpen to Liebroeck, supporting his riflemen everywhere by numerous machine-guns, while his artillery engaged the 1st Horse Battery energetically.

The farm of Yserbeek was attacked and taken, and the enemy's success seemed to be assured, when, at about 3 P.M., the 4th mixed Brigade (four battalions of the 4th and 24th Line Regiments) arrived on the battle-field, having left Haekendover at 9.30 A.M., and marched 16 miles under a very hot sun. The brigade reached Loxbergen during the fighting ; six companies covered the movement on the right, a battalion attacked the farm of Yserbeek, and the last was held in reserve. In spite of their fatigue these troops soon reached the farm of Yserbeek and the hamlet of Velpen, round which severe fighting took place. With great dash they penetrated into Velpen, where they found themselves under the fire of machine-guns hidden in the houses. The enemy's artillery energetically supported several counter-attacks, but the three batteries of the 4th Brigade, which came into action at 3.30, silenced them. In the end, at 6 P.M., the enemy gave way, and retired on Haelen, leaving his dead and his wounded behind him.

The engagement at Haelen, favourable as it had been for the Belgians, was but an episode in the total of the German movements. The Army Command watched these movements carefully by means of its Intelligence Department. From reports received up to the 17th it appeared that :

In front of the left of the Army the enemy was reported in

the directions of Wilderen, St. Trond, Tongres, Hasselt, Herck St. Lambert, Lummen, Kermpt, Stockroy, Genck, Asch, Beeringen, Tessenderloo, Bourg-Léopold, and Moll, while very large numbers of troops had crossed by the bridges at Lixhe.

In front of the Belgian centre, strong bodies of the enemy were announced in most of the villages round Esemael, Landen, Waremme, and Hannut.

On the Belgian right flank the enemy had considerable bodies of troops about Huppaye, Jauchelette, and Piétrebais; German troops were crossing the Meuse at Ampsin, while others repaired the bridge at Huy and passed over the river at that place.

By the morning of the 18th August the situation had become extremely critical. The day began with an engagement on the Belgian left. The Cavalry Division was attacked all along the front which it was holding, from Budingen to Diest, but resisted vigorously, especially at Diest. At 7 P.M., Budingen and Geet-Betz, defended by two squadrons of the 1st Regiment of Guides, were attacked by a strong detachment of infantry, which crossed the Gette at 10 A.M. Haelen, where there were two platoons of Carbineer Cyclists and a squadron of the 5th Lancers, was shelled from 7.30 A.M. At 9.15 A.M. the enemy's infantry reached the Gette and threw bridges over it, while at Diest two platoons of cyclists and the company of pioneers held their own for an hour and a half against a brigade of all arms. The Belgian Cavalry Division was then forced to retire north of Winghe St. Georges, to which place the 2nd Army Division had been sent to prolong the left of the Army. Further to the south, a German corps was advancing against the 1st Army Division. After driving in the Belgian outposts, the enemy occupied Tirlemont and attacked the positions of Hautem St. Marguerite, both in front and in flank. The 2nd Brigade offered a stubborn resistance till late in the evening, and enabled the rest of the division to disengage itself, but suffered heavily in this severe engagement.

By this time the presence of masses of the enemy's infantry on the Belgian left flank and front, the violence of their attacks, the new information received in the course of the day—especially with regard to the constant crossing from the south to the north bank of the Meuse by fresh masses of infantry, by the bridges at Huy, Ampsin, and Flône—all combined to

remove any possible doubt from the Headquarters Staff as to the imminent approach of vastly superior hostile forces advancing against the front and flanks of the Army. The enveloping movement commenced towards Diest and Aerschot proved, moreover, that the Army was threatened with having its left flank turned, and with being cut off from the Antwerp base.

As it turned out, the events which occurred in rapid succession on the following days were to confirm these views. There were actually, about the 18th, to the north of the Meuse :

First, the 2nd, 4th, and 9th Corps, which were making for the left wing of the Belgian Army between Diest and Tirlemont; they were supported on the flank by the 2nd German Cavalry Division, which was advancing between the Grande Nèthe and the Démer.

Secondly, the 3rd, 7th, and 10th Corps, which, after passing between Liège and Huy from the south to the north bank of the Meuse, were marching towards the front Jodoigne-Namur ; these were preceded by the 4th and 9th Cavalry Divisions, which were moving on Wavre and Gembloux.

Lastly, the six first-line corps were followed by five reserve corps.

Thus, without counting those German forces which were moving towards France across the Belgian provinces of Luxemburg and Namur, there were at that moment about 500,000 men advancing on the left bank of the Meuse.

Now what was the situation of the French and British Armies in Belgium, on the afternoon of the 18th August, at the moment when the Belgian Army thus found itself in actual contact with immensely superior German forces ? According to information furnished by the French General Staff, the 5th French Army had (see Map on p. 251) one corps holding the bridges on the Meuse from Hastière to the fortified position of Namur, and the bridges over the Sambre from Floreffe to Tamines ; the three other corps forming this Army were to arrive on the 19th in the region of Philippeville. It was threatened by a hostile group reported to be four army corps strong, stretching from Yvoir to Beauraing, and which had attacked Dinant on the evening of the 17th. The British Army was at that moment detraining south of the Sambre

about Maubeuge ; only its Cavalry Division had actually detrained ; the Army was to be ready to move, possibly on the 22nd, certainly on the 23rd.

Thus the Belgian Army, about two army corps strong, remained alone in actual contact with eleven of the German army corps, belonging to the 1st and 2nd Armies, so that joint action in line with the French and British Armies was impossible of realisation on the position taken up. It was necessary to come to an immediate decision. If the Belgian Army remained stationary it would have, at daybreak on the 19th, to fight a battle the disastrous result of which was not for a moment in doubt ; attacked in front and on both flanks by greatly superior forces, what was left of it would be cut off from Antwerp, where, *vide* p. 244, all its supplies and munitions had been collected.

The Belgian Army had maintained itself in its position of observation from the 5th to the 18th August—that is, during thirteen days. It had resisted the attacks of the enemy's cavalry and light troops, and had forced him to carry out the concentration of his right in the frontier region, and to lose valuable time in deploying his main body in a wide enveloping movement. When the latter was on the point of taking effect, the only course open to the Belgian Army was to retreat, so as to avoid destruction. On the 18th August, in the afternoon, the King decided on the retreat of the Army towards the north-west. At 7.30 P.M. orders were issued that at dawn the Army was to proceed to the left bank of the Dyle, and to halt on the front Neeryssche-Louvain-Rotselaer. At daybreak a sharp rearguard action commenced between the 2nd German Army Corps and the brigade of the 3rd Division stationed near Aerschot. It then became evident that the enemy's right outflanked the Belgian left, and that the front previously decided on had become untenable. The retirement on to the line of forts of the Antwerp position was then carried out as rapidly as possible.

On the 20th the Army reached the entrenched camp of Antwerp without having been seriously molested. It was ready to play a further part in the operations agreed on with the armies of the Guaranteeing Powers by detaining in its front forces at least equal in numbers to its own. The enemy, closely following up the Belgian Army, entered Louvain on the

19th, and Brussels on the 20th. It was not till the 24th August, however, that the French frontier was crossed, or in other words, on the 23rd day of the French mobilisation. Such was the result of the operations of the Belgian Army in this first phase of the campaign.

The Defence of Namur

We have seen (p. 244) that after the loss of the line of the Meuse near Liège, the first natural line of defence which the Belgian Army could occupy was formed by the Gette, prolonged by the course of the Meuse between Namur and Givet. Now Namur with its nine forts constituted one of the strong points of this line. Moreover, Belgium had undertaken to provide for the defence of her fortified places (see p. 240). For these two reasons the 4th Division had been allotted to the defence of the fortified position of Namur.

As early as the 5th August in Condroz, and the 7th in Hesbaye, German cavalry patrols came into collision with the Belgian cavalry. The most serious engagement took place on the 13th at Boneffe, when a German detachment, consisting of 300 sabres, 400 cyclists, and some machine-guns, had established itself to the north of that village, and was surprised and dispersed by two Belgian squadrons and two cyclist companies. On the 15th a German detachment attempted to force a crossing of the Meuse at Dinant, but a French force which was defending the valley repulsed the attack. At this moment the 8th Brigade was moved up towards Namur, from Huy, which it was occupying, as it ran the risk of being cut off by the German masses which were advancing westwards on both banks of the Meuse. Before moving it had destroyed the crossings of the river. On the 19th the 8th Brigade retired from Andenne on to the fortified position, after having destroyed the bridges and blocked the tunnel of Seilles. From that day enemy troops of all men were reported within the zone of the fortress, in the direction of Faulx, as well as in that of Ramillies-Offus, where several regiments of German infantry and artillery were concentrated. Guns of very large calibre accompanied them.

Early on the 20th, the enemy began to drive in the main



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guards of the north-eastern sector of the fortress. In front of Forts Maizeret, Andoy, and Dave, German batteries were located and shelled. During the night three attacks were attempted by the enemy's infantry in the intervals of the fort of Marchovelette.

The bombardment of Namur commenced on the 21st August, at 10 A.M. It took place simultaneously against Forts Andoy, Maizeret, Marchovelette, and Cognelée, as well as against the intervals and the ground in rear ; from the first it was of an extremely violent character. Howitzers and mortars fired on the forts, while the heavy artillery of the army troops took as its objective the trenches and the supporting points of the intervals ; some guns opened fire on the town itself, and bombarded it during four hours. Towards evening Fort Maizeret had received a great many shells, but its cupolas were still in working order. At Fort Andoy the damage was very serious ; several cupolas were jammed by fragments of concrete, and the magazines had been partly destroyed. Fort Marchovelette had also suffered considerably ; only one cupola of 12 centimetre guns and two of 5.7 centimetres remained serviceable. Fort Cognelée, on the other hand, had received only slight damage. But in the three first-named forts the telephonic apparatus had been rendered unserviceable. The bombardment continued during the night.

On the 22nd August, in the course of the morning, the garrison pushed out reconnaissances towards the besieging lines. They were everywhere met by heavy rifle and machine-gun fire. The bombardment was as severe as on the previous day, and was extended to include Fort Dave. Towards 10 A.M. the garrison was reinforced by three French battalions (two of the 45th and one of the 148th Regiment), which were utilised in an attempted attack on enemy artillery reported near Wartet. The field artillery which was to support the attack was compelled to cease fire and the troops had to be withdrawn. Meanwhile the town had again been shelled.

By evening Fort Dave had only been slightly damaged. Forts Andoy and Cognelée continued to fire. Fort Maizeret had been completely destroyed and was evacuated. Fort Marchovelette had been the object of systematic destruction,

and its last cupola had been rendered unserviceable. The bombardment continued all through the night.

At dawn on the 23rd August the fire of the heavy artillery increased against Fort Cognelée; an infantry attack was repulsed, but towards noon the fort was in the enemy's hands. By this time the main structure of Fort Marchovelette was full of cracks, and the fire of the German heavy pieces was directed against Forts Emines and Suarlée. All along the portion of the front attacked, both the permanent works and the field works in the intervals had been damaged. From Cognelée to Andoy only the field batteries were able still to reply to the fire of the assailants, and soon they too were reduced to silence. The troops of the north-east and south-east sectors then withdrew towards Namur.

By this time the situation of the 4th Division had become untenable. As the enemy had advanced in force north of the Meuse, and had forced the passages over the Sambre between Charleroi and Namur, as well as those over the Meuse towards Dinant, the retreat of the division was cut off in every direction, except between the Sambre and Meuse. It was decided on the 23rd that the retirement should take place on that side. At about midnight the Belgian column bivouacked between Bioul and Arbre, threatened by the enemy in rear, and especially on the flank; it succeeded, however, in extricating itself, except the rearguard, which was surrounded at Ermeton-sur-Biert; 12,000 men thus reached Mariembourg and France. They arrived at Antwerp about ten days later. In spite of the difficulties of the retreat, and of the return to Antwerp, the evacuation of the division had been effected with a minimum of loss, and the Army was once more complete in all its units, in the entrenched camp of Antwerp.

Fort Suarlée fell on the 25th August, after sustaining a severe bombardment.

Operations in Combination with the Armies of the Guaranteeing Powers, 20th August to 27th September

From August 20 (see page 249 and Map on p. 251) the Belgian Army was on the Rupel and the Nèthe, with a

detachment at Termonde, and was close to its Antwerp base and to the line of forts defending that place. In this position it, in the first place, saved from invasion a considerable part of the province of Antwerp, and of Flanders. But the Belgian Army was, in addition, in a position to subordinate all its undertakings to the operations which were to be carried out in combination with the French and British forces. Its function was to be to attract and to keep in front of it the greatest possible number of the enemy forces. The opportunities for taking the offensive would be, on the one hand, when the Franco-British Army was engaged in battles on a large scale, and when it would be of great importance to detain German forces, and on the other hand, when the proportion of the Belgian to the German strength at any time enabled the offensive to be assumed under favourable circumstances.

Up to the 25th September the German forces opposed to the Belgian Army were not superior to the latter in numbers, and, generally speaking, there was equilibrium of forces. When this equilibrium was upset in favour of the Belgian Army, the Army Command decided to take the offensive, to oblige the enemy to obtain reinforcements, so as to re-establish the equilibrium. After the 25th September, the enemy was considerably reinforced, and the situation was completely changed.

Besides these operations on a large scale, the Belgian operations undertaken in combination with those of the Franco-British forces aimed, on the one hand, at the retention at all costs of a line of retreat for the Army towards the west, so as to ensure an ultimate junction, and, on the other, at the destruction of the lines of communication of the German Army.

Commencing on the 21st August, the bulk of the German Armies disappeared from the front of the Belgian Army and turned towards the Sambre and Hainaut. Before Antwerp an Army of observation was installed, consisting of the 3rd and 9th Reserve Corps, whilst the 13th Reserve Division and one or two Landwehr Divisions established themselves about Liège. These corps had just arrived at the moment when the Belgium Headquarters, on the 24th August, learnt that the opposing forces on the Sambre and at Mons were engaged in

violent battles. The bulk of the enemy's forces appeared to be sufficiently distant for their intervention to be out of the question. Circumstances were very favourable for making a sortie from the entrenched camp before the German Army of observation had time to fortify its positions strongly. The sortie took place on the 25th and 26th August.

The sector selected for the operation was chosen with a view to threatening the German communications and to piercing the lines of the 3rd and 9th Reserve Corps, which seemed to extend on a very wide front, from Wolverthem by Elewyt to Aerschot and even Diest. The following dispositions were made for the sortie.

The 6th Division was to make the central attack on Hofstade and Elewyt ; the 1st and 5th Divisions were to operate on its right between the canal of Willebroeck and the Senne ; the 2nd Division was to come into action on its left, towards Boortmeerbeek ; the 3rd Division was to be in reserve in rear of the 6th, while the Cavalry Division was also to be in reserve, near Putte.

The attack encountered defensive dispositions on the part of the enemy, which had already been strongly organised. The 6th Division gained possession of Hofstade and of the Schiplaeken woods, the 1st and 5th Divisions took Sempst, Weerde and Eppeghem, but on the left wing the 2nd Division was unable to debouch on the west bank of the Louvain Canal, and was even forced to retire. In the centre the 6th Division failed to capture Elewyt. The battles of the Sambre and of Mons being over, the operation could not be continued with advantage, and the Army returned to the entrenched camp.

On the 4th September, German troops marched on Termonde, drove back the detachment which was guarding that town, crossed the Scheldt, and threatened the line of retreat towards the west. The 1st and 6th Divisions were ordered to cross to the left bank of the river in order to keep open the Belgian communications in that direction. The enemy withdrew to the right bank and Termonde was reoccupied. After this, the enemy was always checked in his attempts to cross the river, and the line of retreat to the west was always kept open.

On the 7th and 8th September the Belgian Headquarters

learnt that the German forces in front of Antwerp had been reduced. Three divisions of the Army of observation were on the march to France in order to reinforce the troops retreating from the Marne on to the Aisne. These units had been replaced by a division of Marines and by the 26th and 37th Landwehr Brigades. The Army Command considered the moment favourable for the execution, by the whole of the Field Army, of a sortie intended either to oblige the enemy to recall towards Antwerp some of the forces despatched to France, or, should he not do this, to inflict a defeat on the inferior German forces in front of Antwerp.

The sortie began on the 9th September. The German position, very strongly entrenched, had its right extended as far as Over de Vaart. It was necessary to avoid a frontal attack on these strong fieldworks, while the Antwerp position had to remain covered. The operation was conducted with a view to turning the German right. The 3rd Division was directed against the end of the position at Over de Vaart, while the 6th moving on Thildonck, and the 2nd on Wygmael and Louvain, were to outflank it. The Cavalry Division, forming the extreme left, was to debouch on the left bank of the Dyle. In front the 1st Division was to attack Hofstade and Elewyt, while the 5th Division was to operate on its right, west of the Senne. A detachment of all arms guarding Termonde was to safeguard the communications.

The sortie began successfully ; on the 9th the crossings over the Démer and over the Dyle were captured ; Aerschot was taken. On the 10th, the offensive was continued, the Belgian left wing advancing towards Louvain, a troop of the 4th Regiment of Chasseurs-à-cheval even entered the town, but the 2nd Division was checked before Wygmael and Putkapel. The enemy then recalled the 6th Reserve Infantry Division which was on its way to France, to meet this attack. On the 11th, the 3rd Division succeeded in an attack on Over de Vaart, the enemy being driven back, and the 6th Division got as far as the Malines-Louvain railway line. On the 12th, the 6th German Division, which had been brought back, came into action near Wespelaer, and the enemy now took the offensive, driving back the 2nd Belgian Division to Rotselaer and Wesemael. This retreat of the left wing necessitated the withdrawal of the 6th Division, and later on that of the 3rd

Division. On the 13th, the whole Army retired to the entrenched camp.

The principal object was attained. The operation had obliged the enemy not only definitely to recall the 6th Division of the 3rd Reserve Corps on to the Belgian front, but also, as was learnt soon afterwards, it had delayed for two days the 9th Reserve Corps on its march southwards, just at a moment when the German Armies, retreating from the Marne, stood in urgent need of reinforcements, The sortie, moreover, had seriously alarmed the enemy even in Brussels itself.

It was about this time that the first measures were taken by the Germans with a view to the siege of Antwerp, and that heavy artillery equipment and more numerous forces were brought up in front of that fortress.

After the 13th September equilibrium was once more established between the opposing forces ; the German troops established before Antwerp were not again reduced in strength. They completed their defences on a position extending by Haecht, Elewyt, and Wolverthem, and prolonged towards the south as far as Grand-Bigard.

The railways system of the country provided the enemy with great facilities for supplying and transporting his troops. The Belgian Army Command wished to interfere with this, and accordingly ordered the formation of seven detachments, each consisting of 100 cyclist volunteers, intended to carry out demolitions of the railway lines in the region occupied by the enemy. On the 22nd September these parties left Antwerp, each having a special zone of operations assigned to it. The greater part succeeded in getting through the German lines and in reaching the selected points, where they cut the principal railway lines of Limburg, Brabant, and Hainaut, causing considerable disturbance to the enemy's transport. Most of these detachments were able to rejoin the Army, but some came in contact with the German troops, and were surrounded or surprised.

On the 25th September the French Headquarters Staff notified that, as a violent engagement was in progress on the left of the Franco-British front, the moment was opportune for the Belgian Army to attack the German lines of communications. In the course of the movements preparatory to the attack, it was ascertained that the strength of the German

forces before Antwerp had been increased, and that the enemy was making his dispositions for a siege of that place.

The more ambitious operation which had been agreed on in consultation with the French Commander had therefore to be reduced to a threatening movement of the main body of the Army towards the south-west. An actual attack was not ordered. Nevertheless, in the course of this operation, advantage was taken by the Commander-in-Chief of a favourable opportunity presenting itself to attack an isolated detachment of the enemy. The 37th Landwehr Brigade was engaged in front of Termonde, and orders were issued for the 4th Belgian Division to make a frontal attack on it from that place, while the 5th Division was to attack its right flank, and the Cavalry Division, which had been moved from Ghent towards Alost, was to make a flank attack on its left. The 4th Division, advancing on both banks of the Dendre, found itself violently engaged ; the 5th Division, fearing an attack on its left flank, only sent weak detachments against the enemy, so that the latter was able to extricate his troops under cover of the darkness.

Defence of Antwerp

At the end of September the enemy had received reinforcements in troops of all arms, and especially in siege artillery and pioneers. The besieging army consisted of the 3rd Reserve Army Corps, the 26th and 37th Brigades of Landwehr, a division of Marines, the 4th Ersatz Division, the 1st Ersatz Reserve Division, a Bavarian Division (probably), a brigade of foot artillery, and a brigade of siege pioneers. The siege operations began on the 28th September, at which moment the main body of the Army was located in the 4th sector. In order to oppose a possible attack on the 3rd sector, the 3rd, 2nd, and 6th Divisions had each left there a detachment consisting of a regiment of infantry, a regiment of cavalry, a cyclist company, and a group of batteries. The 2nd Division had been placed so as to form a reserve for the 3rd and 4th sectors.

The enemy drove back the detachment of the 1st Division, which, posted in the south, was holding the outskirts of Malines. He bombarded Forts Waelhem and Wavre St. Catherine with heavy artillery. The resistance of the latter

was soon seriously reduced by the fire of the 42-centimetre howitzers. The 1st and 2nd Divisions were then hurriedly ordered into the 3rd sector (Waelhem-Lierre); the 3rd and 6th Divisions remained in the 4th sector (Waelhem to the Scheldt); the 4th Division was at Termonde, and the 5th constituted the general reserve.

On the 29th September the enemy attacked the 4th sector and drove back the advanced troops of the 3rd and 6th Divisions. The bombardment of the 3rd sector was continued, and obliged the Belgian outposts to retire on to the line of the forts. Soon all the works on the left bank of the Nèthe were being shelled. Forts Wavre St. Catherine and Waelhem suffered the most on that day; an ammunition store exploded in the former fort, and the successive destruction of the casemates forced the garrison to evacuate the work at 6 P.M.

The effect of the German heavy artillery, as experienced already at Liège, at Namur, at Maubeuge, and, on the 29th September, at Forts Wavre St. Catherine and Waelhem, left no possible doubt as to the fate in store for the Antwerp fortifications. Contrary to what had previously been universally believed, the entrenched camp could not long afford a safe refuge for the field troops. Hence from that day Army Headquarters had to keep in view the moment when the Army would be compelled to abandon the fortress in order to avoid having, at no distant date, to lay down their arms.

The first thing to do, with a view to preparing for the retreat of the Army, was to transfer the base to the west, and Ostend was selected as the most suitable place. Arrangements were accordingly made at once for the removal to the new base of the wounded, the prisoners, stores of every kind (munitions, provisions, medical equipment, etc.), the depots of the various units, the recruits of the new levy, the untrained volunteers, the manufacturing establishments, etc., etc. When the base was cleared out of Antwerp the Army would regain its freedom of action, and would continue to live its own life, in Antwerp or outside, and it would be able to evacuate the fortress the moment its investment became imminent.

From Antwerp to Ostend the only line of railway then

available started from the left bank of the river and passed through St. Nicolas and Ghent. Now the city was on the right bank and was not connected with the left bank by rail. The first railway bridge up stream was at Tamise, and in order to reach it the bridge of Willebroeck, which was exposed to the fire of the enemy's guns, had to be passed. Precautions were taken so successfully that trains were able to pass every night, with lights extinguished, from the 29th September to the 7th October, without attracting the enemy's attention and without being molested.

Thus the movement was prepared for; but to enable it to be carried out later on, it was necessary to make the lines of retreat secure. At the same time the Antwerp position had to be held up to the last possible moment, since by doing so the invasion of the country would be impeded, and a junction with the French and British forces would be rendered possible, it was hoped, in time to enable the latter to prolong the Belgian line southwards, along the Dendre. The situation was similar, it will be seen, to that in which the Army had found itself when it was in position on the Gette (p. 244); there also it had to hold on as long as possible with a view to a junction with the Franco-British forces, and there also it had in the end to retreat owing to the junction not having been effected up to the moment when the danger became imminent.

In view of the above, the Belgian forces were disposed as follows: the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 5th, and 6th Divisions were posted in front of the Rupel and of the Nèthe, to defend the line of the threatened forts; the 4th Division, by holding the line of the Scheldt at Baesrode, Termonde, and Schoonaerde, covered the lines of retreat towards the west; the Cavalry Division, with Headquarters at Wetteren, observed all the left bank of the Dendre, and co-operated with the 4th Division.

So long as the Dendre was not crossed by the enemy the position of the Army was not compromised, and even after crossing the Dendre he would run up against the 4th Division and the Cavalry Division on the Scheldt.

On the 30th September, two very severe attacks were made against the bridge-head of Blaesveld, which was defended by the 3rd Division. They were driven back with heavy

loss. The 6th Division similarly repulsed an attack made on its outposts. The permanent works of the 4th sector were shelled without success. In the 3rd sector, the situation soon became very grave owing to a heavy bombardment of the whole front. The forts were shelled uninterruptedly for five hours, and the intervals between them were also heavily bombarded. The troops of the 1st Division gave way before this fire, which destroyed all the works, shelter-trenches, and refuges. At Fort Lierre, the explosion of a shell projected the cupola of a 5.7 centimetre gun out of its pit. At Fort Koningshoyckt most of the guns were out of action and part of the work was destroyed. The redoubts of Dorpveld and Boschbeek were full of cracks; the concrete masses, when struck by the projectiles, seemed to be forced into the ground; the shock was so great that the gun detachments could only with difficulty keep on their feet in the cupolas. At nightfall the enemy ceased fire. No infantry whatever had as yet shown itself.

On the 1st October, from 2 to 4 A.M., all the artillery of the defence which was still capable of action proceeded to shell all the enemy's batteries within their field of fire. The enemy bombarded Fort Breendonck, but without much effect. The bombardment of the 3rd sector was resumed towards 8 A.M., and was extended to the works and intervals of Fort Kessel. Under cover of this bombardment and of a continuous curtain of shell-fire, the infantry then made an attack, and succeeded in occupying the defensive works to the west of the village of Wavre St. Catherine. The 1st Division, in trying to reoccupy its trenches, met with a resistance which it was unable to overcome. The 2nd Division, on the left of the 1st, was shaken by the fire of the enemy's guns and driven back on to the Nèthe. Fort Koningshoyckt still held out, but the Boschbeek Redoubt had to be evacuated, while that of Dorpveld was stormed by the enemy. During this time the 1st Brigade (5th Division), which had been sent to Lierre on the 30th to reinforce the 1st Fortress Regiment of Carbineers, succeeded in holding its ground there.

The Military Governor then ordered the occupation of the supporting position prepared between Fort Koningshoyckt and the Duffel Redoubt. During the night the enemy

attempted to pierce the interval between the Tallaert Redoubt and Fort Lierre, but again met with a check.

In the course of the 2nd October, the 1st and 2nd Divisions counter-attacked in order to retake the positions lost on the line of forts. On the left bank of the Nèthe, Fort Duffel alone still held out. The garrison of the Dorpveld Redoubt had been shut up in its shelters since 5 A.M. on the previous day, the enemy having occupied the main structure and blocked the ventilation holes and having commenced to mine the casemates. The commander and the last of the defenders were still at their posts when a mine completed the destruction of the work. Fort Koningshoyckt had been surrounded by the enemy's riflemen since the attack made on the 1st October ; the machinery vault, the machine-gun casemates, and the front face of the gorge had all collapsed. At noon a magazine blew up ; at 2.30 P.M. an explosion rendered the fort untenable. The Tallaert Redoubt had also been destroyed. Fort Lierre had been subjected to a methodical destruction by a bombardment which was continued during several hours. At about noon only the entrance postern remained intact ; the cupolas were destroyed or inaccessible ; most of the passages were blocked ; the garrison left the fort at 6 P.M. The Military Governor then decided to withdraw the line of resistance across the Nèthe, the south bank of which was flooded.

On the 3rd October, from 6 A.M., the fire of the German heavy batteries was directed on Fort Kessel, on the north bank of the Nèthe, and also on the approaches leading to it from the rear. From this moment the only artillery of which the defence was able to dispose consisted of field artillery (7.5 centimetre guns and 15 centimetre howitzers) and of two armoured trains carrying 12 centimetre guns. The Duffel Redoubt, having exhausted its ammunition, fell on that day. Fort Kessel was shelled by batteries of large calibre ; its front face and gorge were enfiladed. The caponnière was struck and blocked by some of the first shells ; a casemate fell in ; at 7 A.M the fire-commander's station was destroyed ; the right-hand flanking battery was out of action ; the cupola containing the 15 centimetre guns, and two cupolas for 5.7 centimetre guns were jammed. At 8.30 A.M., the right half of the fort was in ruins. It was abandoned in the course of the day.

On the previous evening, a brigade of British Marine Light Infantry, 2200 strong, had arrived at Antwerp.[1] On the 4th it relieved the 1st mixed Brigade before Lierre. On the same day the bombardment was extended to the whole north bank of the Nèthe, and the enemy forced the troops defending the ground lying between the Great and the Little Nèthe to retire. At the same time German troops crossed the Dendre, and attempted to cross the Scheldt at Schoonaerde and at Termonde.

[1] [See *Milit* pp. 4

On the 5th, the enemy occupied Lierre, but was unable to debouch from it ; he also succeeded in effecting a crossing farther down stream. In addition, fresh attacks were made on the troops guarding the lines of retreat, notably towards Schoonaerde ; they were everywhere repulsed, but the position of the 4th Division began to be critical.

On the 6th October, the besieging force made a general attack on the position which had been placed in a state of defence on the north bank of the Nèthe. The line formed by the 1st, 2nd, and 5th Divisions, reinforced by the reserves of the 3rd and 6th Divisions and by the brigade of British Marines, gave way under the violent German artillery fire. Several counter-attacks were attempted, of which some got as far as the river bank of the Nèthe, but did not succeed in arresting the enemy's advance. On this day several attempts were made to force the passage of the Scheldt at Baesrode, Termonde, and Schoonaerde, but were stopped by the 4th Division and the Cavalry Division. But, as the Commander of the 4th Division reported that the situation was becoming more and more serious, and as it was indispensable to secure communication with the west, the 6th Division was ordered, at about 10 A.M., to cross the Scheldt at Tamise and to go to the support of the 4th.

Altogether, at this moment, the enemy having forced the line of the Nèthe, and having crossed the Dendre, the situation of the Army was completely changed. Events affecting it had also taken place elsewhere, as will be seen.

Operations in Combination with the Armies of the Guaranteeing Powers, 6th to 15th October

Up to the beginning of October, the chief danger which the Belgian Army had to face was that of being surrounded by the

German forces which were before Antwerp. A new danger was about to threaten it. The retreat from the Marne had, by the 13th September, brought the mass of the German Armies on to the line of the Aisne, with its right about Lassigny. From that moment the opposing forces had constantly tried to turn each other's flank on the western wing. The German flank was thus successively prolonged from Lassigny towards the north, and had reached the neighbourhood of Lille by the beginning of October.

The effect of this was that the Belgian Army would be in danger of being cut off from the Franco-British Armies if the German front were prolonged still farther towards the north, the distance from Lille to the sea at Nieuport being only 38 miles, whereas from the Nèthe to Nieuport is no less than 88 miles. Thus at the beginning of October the Belgian Army found its retreat threatened not only by the besieging Army, but also by the right wing of the German Armies operating in France.

It therefore became necessary, if the Army was to continue to hold Antwerp, that its line of retreat should be covered farther to the west than before. Beyond Termonde, Schoonaerde and Wetteren, Ghent had to be occupied, owing to its being the junction of communications in that region and equidistant from Lille, where the German right wing already rested, and from the Nèthe, on which the Belgian Army was still drawn up. Under these circumstances, on the 4th October the Belgian Commander-in-Chief, convinced that Ghent must be held at all costs, and not having any troops available for the purpose, sent an urgent message to the British military authorities, who had shown themselves disposed to provide help for the defence of Antwerp, pointing out the necessity for the occupation of Ghent. The co-operation of the British 7th Division,[1] which was landing on the Belgian coast, had been promised, and some French troops were also to take part in the movement.

[1] [See *Military*, I, p. 403]

On the evening of the 6th October the following was the situation.

The line of the Nèthe had been pierced, and the Dendre had been crossed by the enemy. The line of the Scheldt was being violently attacked by ever-increasing German forces, which threatened to cut off the Belgian Army, so that all

hopes of a junction under the guns of Antwerp with the main body of the Franco-British forces had vanished. The occupation of Ghent was provided for, and the last military trains conveying the base supplies from Antwerp towards Ostend were to leave on the night of the 6th/7th. Retreat was still possible, but it was becoming urgent to execute it.

The King issued orders for the passage of the Field Army on to the left bank of the Scheldt during the night of the 6th/7th. It was to utilise the bridges of Tamise, Hoboken, and Burght, and was then to retreat westwards. The fortress of Antwerp was to continue to be defended by the garrisons of the forts, some regiments of Fortress Infantry, the 2nd Army Division and three British Naval Brigades, the two last of which had arrived at Antwerp on the 5th October.

The retreat began on the evening of the 6th, and by the morning of the 7th the whole force was on the left bank of the Scheldt. The King left Antwerp at 3 P.M. on the 7th to accompany the Army in its movement, and spent the succeeding nights at St. Nicolas, Selzaete, and Eecloo respectively. It was high time. On the same day the Scheldt was forced at Schoonaerde. The 6th Division, which had been sent in support to the left bank on the 6th October, was holding the enemy in check at Berlaere. In the Ghent neighbourhood a mixed detachment of the enemy was already reported at Cruyshautem, with advanced parties at Nazareth. As the Franco-British forces had not yet arrived at Ghent, the 4th Brigade was at once transported there to oppose any attempts on that place which might be made by the enemy. Up to this time the protection of the roads and railways which converge on this point had been entrusted to bodies of the civic guard, a squadron of mounted gendarmerie, and four battalions of volunteers.

On the 8th October the enemy advanced on Lokeren, where he came up against the 3rd Division. That evening the 1st Division was moved by rail from St. Nicolas to Ostend, while the other divisions marched towards the Terneuzen Canal. On the 9th, the 37th Landwehr Brigade was operating north of the Scheldt near Lokeren, and was followed by the 4th Ersatz Division, which had crossed the river at Schoonaerde. The 1st Ersatz Reserve Division and a Division of Bavarian Landwehr advanced on Ghent by Quatrecht, Gontrode, and

Lemberge, but meanwhile reinforcements had reached Ghent; a brigade of French Marine Fusiliers had taken up its quarters there on the previous evening, and a considerable portion of the British 7th Division arrived during the day. Ghent and its approaches from the east and south-east were occupied by 25,000 to 30,000 men.

Thus threatened on their left flank, the German forces which had crossed the Scheldt were unable to advance northwards to the Dutch frontier, and had to look on powerless to interfere while the Belgian Army carried out its retreat without being seriously molested. On the 9th, at Melle, they came in contact with the French Marine Fusiliers supported by two groups of Belgian Artillery, and next day again, the front Melle-Meirelbeke was subjected to a violent attack, which, however, was repulsed by the French Marine Fusiliers. While the retreat of the Army was being successfully conducted, the attacks on the fortress of Antwerp had redoubled in intensity.

On the 7th October Fort Broechem having been destroyed, the enemy established himself north of the Nèthe, and began the attack of the second line of defence. Fort 1 was the first to be bombarded. In the 4th sector, Forts Liezele and Breendonck still kept the besiegers in check. The bombardment of the city itself began at midnight.

The following was the disposition of the German forces before Antwerp on the 8th October. The 3rd Reserve Corps, reinforced by the 26th Landwehr Brigade, occupied the ground opposite Forts 1 to 6; the Marine Infantry Brigade was in the rear of the left of the 3rd Corps; between the Dyle and the Scheldt were the Marine Artillery Brigade and the 4th Ersatz Division.

The bombardment of the supporting points of the second line was continued without a pause. In view of the situation the Governor decided at 5 P.M. that the 2nd Army Division and the British troops, except the Anglo-Belgian garrison of Fort No. 4, should be made to join the Field Army; accordingly in the evening the above-mentioned troops began to cross the Scheldt by the Burght and Steen bridges. The crossing was completed at about 2 A.M.

During the day on the 9th, Fort Merxem capitulated, as well as the Dryhoek Redoubt, and Forts Brasschaet and the Audaen Redoubt were evacuated after their electric plant and

their guns had been put out of action ; the garrison of Fort No. 4 left that work, crossed the Scheldt and destroyed the bridges. By about 10 A.M. the Governor had retired to Fort Sainte Marie, and at about noon the bombardment of the city ceased. The Military Governor capitulated on the 10th October.

The main body of the Army, on the morning of the 9th October, was behind the canal from Ghent to Terneuzen, with rearguards east of that canal, towards Loochristy, Lokeren, Wachtebeke, and Moerbeke, which were left there in order to cover the retreat of the 2nd Division and of the British contingent, which had left Antwerp on the evening of the 8th October.

Two lines of defence were available for the retreating Army, one the Ghent-Terneuzen Canal, prolonged by the Scheldt, the other the Schipdonck Canal continued by the Lys. The intention was to resist on one or the other of these lines, and thus to save from invasion a considerable portion of Flanders, if a junction could be effected with the Franco-British forces. But at that moment the French left wing was near Arras, and the British Army was only beginning to detrain in the region of St. Omer.[1] Under these circumstances, by stopping on the Ghent-Terneuzen Canal, or on the Schipdonck Canal, the Belgian Army would have run the risk of having its right turned, and of being driven on to the Dutch frontier or into the sea by the very superior German forces which were already assembled in Belgium. These forces included the Antwerp siege Army, now available, several divisions of which were already on the march westwards, as well as the 22nd, 23rd, 26th, and 27th Reserve Army Corps recently formed, which had just arrived in Belgium.

[1] [See *Military*, I, p. 402]

There was therefore no choice but to retire farther, until a line should be reached which would allow of a junction with the Franco-British forces, and should at the same time constitute a strong defensive position. The Army accordingly retired as far as the Yser.

The line of the Yser presented considerable advantages. Looked upon from the point of view of its general relation to the Franco-British front, which at that moment extended from Lassigny towards Arras, it was in prolongation of that line and constituted an excellent defensive position, securing the junction with that front. As regards its own merits, the position

was tactically a strong one, the left flank resting on the sea, the command of which was in friendly hands, the front being covered by the river, and the right flank being protected by the river higher up, which from the old fort at Knocke bends westwards by Elsendamme and Rousbrugge. The extent of the line, moreover, was not disproportionate to the strength of the Army. Finally, and this was a considerable moral advantage, it offered to the Army a last refuge on Belgian soil. The King, judging that no other line offered as great advantages, decided to establish the Army on the Yser, and to place this line in a state of defence.

We have seen (p. 257) how the forces which held Ghent had successfully barred the road to the attempts which were made to envelop the Belgian Army. On the 11th October the latter had completed its movement, and the troops holding Ghent were at once ordered to retire. A fresh effort on the part of the enemy on that evening was arrested by the British 7th Division, which, in spite of it, succeeded in retiring under artillery and infantry fire. The Belgian cavalry covered its retreat and kept in touch with the enemy's forces, fighting rearguard actions on the Ghent-Terneuzen Canal, and on the Scheldt, as well as on the Schipdonck Canal, and on the Lys. The 1st Cavalry Division then retired, fighting, by Lootenhulle, on to the right wing of the Army. The 2nd Cavalry Division (which had recently been formed, mainly out of the divisional cavalry regiments) withdrew on Ursel, Bruges, and the front of the Army.

By the 12th, the transport of the troops and of their convoys was secured, in spite of the danger of the situation and of the technical difficulties, the railways Selzaete-Eecloo-Bruges and Bruges-Thourout being single lines. On the 15th October the Belgian Army was on the Yser.

Joint Operations with the Armies of the Guaranteeing Powers: the Battle of the Yser

At the moment when the Belgian Army, reduced as it was to 82,000 men, including 48,000 rifles, had arrived in the selected position on the Yser, the King addressed a proclamation to the troops.

These words did not conceal from the Army the supreme effort which was to be demanded of it. Its task had assumed a special importance in view of the situation of the opposing forces in the north of France.

About the 15th October the French front was strongly prepared for defence as far as La Bassée. Since the end of September the German force, replying to the enveloping movement of the Franco-British Armies, was in its turn trying to turn the left wing of the latter. The German forces thus employed in the principal theatre of war were shortly to be joined, on the one hand, by the besieging army from Antwerp which was now available for other operations, and on the other, by the four newly-formed corps of which the arrival in Belgium has already been mentioned (p. 267.) To oppose these powerful German forces and to counter the vast movement which they were about to undertake northwards between La Bassée and Dunkerque, there were in Flanders only the Belgian Army, the 7th British Infantry and the 3rd British Cavalry Divisions, the French Marine Fusilier Brigade, and two French Territorial Divisions.

The Belgian Army, to which had been attached the French Marine Fusiliers Brigade, took up its position on the Yser, between the sea and Zuydschoote. The British 7th Infantry and 3rd Cavalry Divisions were posted in front of Ypres. The occupation of these positions was soon completed by the detraining of a British Cavalry Corps and of the British 2nd and 3rd Army Corps at St. Omer, and by the advance on Ypres of the two French Territorial Divisions, whilst bodies of cavalry were directed on Staden and others were operating in the direction of Lille.

The result of these combined movements was apparent about the 17th, by which date, while the British 1st Army Corps was detraining at St. Omer, the British Cavalry Corps and 2nd and 3rd Army Corps occupied a line extending from near La Bassée up to the positions of the 7th British Division, which was holding the line Zandvoorde-Gheluvelt-Zonnebeke. To the north of this latter line bodies of French and of British cavalry connected the front with the Belgian line. Thus the line had been closed and a continuous front had been established. The *joint operations* were now to commence.

In truth, this continuous front was but slenderly held in view of the great strength of the German forces which were concentrating between the Lys and the sea in order to try to pierce the line held by their adversaries, but reinforcements were being prepared to strengthen the portion of the line situated to the north of the Lys. These were :

The 1st British Corps, which was, on the 21st October, to operate on the left of the British 7th Division on the front Zonnebeke-Langemarck ;

The 42nd French Division, which was to come into action on the 23rd October on the Belgian front ;

The 9th French Army Corps, which was to fight to the east of Ypres, commencing on the 24th October ;

And the 16th French Corps, which was to come into action south of Ypres on the 31st October.

But several days had to pass before these reinforcements could arrive, and it was necessary at all costs to gain time. The enemy's plan was soon revealed ; it was to seize the line of the Yser, from the sea to Dixmude, and to hurl back the Belgian Army which was defending it, so as to turn the Franco-British left. Thus it was the Belgian Army which had to break the first shock of the enemy, and the French Headquarters Staff asked that it should resist during forty-eight hours.

The front occupied by the Belgian Army was formed, from the sea to the place called the ' Fort of Knocke,' by the Yser River, which on that stretch is deepened and revetted to form a canal, and thence to Zuydschoote and Boesinghe by the Yser Canal to Ypres. From Nieuport-Bains to Dixmude is eleven miles, and it is another eleven from Dixmude to Boesinghe, so that the total front was twenty-two miles in extent. The Yser, about 65 feet wide, has dykes on both banks, that on the western bank commanding the one on the eastern by 6½ feet. About halfway between Nieuport and Dixmude the river forms a bend, the concavity of which is turned towards the west. This bend, called the ' bend of Tervaete,' constituted a weak point in the line of defence. The whole region is intersected by ditches, canals, and streams, the most important of the latter being the Beverdyk, which is continued by the Noord-Vaart. Its course is nearly parallel to that of the Yser, and it attains to a width of about 32 feet

up stream from Nieuport. The Beverdyk flows in almost its entire course between the Yser and the railway line from Nieuport to Dixmude, which has an embankment three to six feet high commanding the plain. The permanent crossings over the river and canal in the portion under consideration are: the Nieuport bridges, the Union bridge near St. Georges, that of Schoorbakke, that of Tervaete, the two Dixmude bridges, the Driegrachten, and the Steenstraate bridges. At Nieuport six canals and water-courses converge: the Furnes Canal, the Noord-Vaart, the canalised Yser, the Nieuwendamme brook, or Old Yser, the Plasschendaele Canal, and the evacuation canal. There are sluices which enable water to be let in from the sea at high tide. These few data will enable an idea to be formed of the ground to be defended.

At the beginning of the battle the Belgian forces were disposed as follows, in the position:

The 2nd Division had to defend the ground from the sea to a point some distance beyond the Union bridge, occupying Lombaertzyde and Mannekensvere, and holding the bridge-head in front of Nieuport so as to retain possession of the bridges and sluices.

The 1st Division had to defend the ground on the right of the 2nd Division as far as Mark 10 of the Yser, and to hold a bridge-head in advance of the Schoorbakke front, and further to occupy Schoore as an advanced post.

The 4th Division came next, from Mark 10 to Mark 14, with advanced posts at Keyem and at Beerst.

The French Marine Fusiliers, the 11th and 12th Line Regiments, with two artillery groups from the 3rd Division, prolonged the front of the 4th Division and occupied, in advance of Dixmude, a bridge-head which covered the railway lines from Dixmude to Nieuport and to Furnes, by which the transport of the Ostend base towards France was still being completed.

The 5th Division was in the neighbourhood of Noordschoote.

The 6th Division, south of the last named, connected the line with that of the French Territorials towards Boesinghe.

The 3rd Division had two brigades in reserve near Lampernisse.

The 1st Cavalry Division covered the right flank of the army, and co-operated with the French cavalry in the direction

of Roulers ; the 2nd was in reserve between Nieuport and Furnes.

Thus, on a front of twenty-two miles, two infantry brigades and one cavalry division were the only reserves at the disposal of the commander.

By the afternoon of the 15th, it had already become apparent that the Germans were preparing an attack on the front Nieuport-Dixmude. On the 16th, contact was established east of the Yser, towards St. Pierre Capelle, and a reconnaissance in force was made by the enemy on Dixmude. On the 17th, German columns were reported : In the north, along the Plasschendaele Canal, from Leffinghe on Slype, and from Ghistelles on Zevecote ; in the south, from Staden on Zarren, which indicated an advance of the enemy's forces towards the front Nieuport-Dixmude. The German artillery was in action at Slype, and was shelling Rattevalle.

In order to reinforce the front Nieuport-Dixmude, the 5th Division was brought back into the second line near Lampernisse, thus bringing up the number of divisions in reserve to two ; the 3rd Division was placed near Avecapelle. The gap left open by the departure of the 5th Division was closed by a brigade detached from the 6th Division and posted near Noordschoote.

The attack on the outposts began on the 18th. Before Nieuport the German troops took Mannekensvere, which was afterwards partially recaptured. Lombaertzyde, defended by the 5th Regiment of the Line, held its own, supported by a British flotilla, which was soon increased by the arrival of some French ships ; these warships shelled the German troops along the coast as far as Middelkerke, and subsequently, during the whole battle, furnished valuable support to the defence. The two advanced posts of Schoore and Keyem fell into the hands of the enemy, but that of Beerst was successfully held.

Fresh dispositions were made to reinforce the line ; the presence of large bodies of Franco-British cavalry in the neighbourhood of Roulers was considered a sufficient safeguard for the right wing of the Army, and the 6th Division was accordingly withdrawn, being replaced by French Territorials. At that moment the reserves were posted as follows : the 3rd Division near Wulpen, the 5th near Oostkerke, and

the 6th near Lampernisse. The 1st Cavalry Division, while co-operating with the French cavalry, was ordered to keep in close touch with the right of the Army. On the 19th, the German attacks were aimed against the left and the centre of the Army, from Lombaertzyde to Beerst, which latter place fell into the enemy's hands.

Owing to the imminence of a determined attack on the centre, the 6th Division was ordered to establish itself at Pervyse. At the same time, to relieve the pressure on the left and centre, a counter-attack was decided on against the enemy's left flank; the 5th Division was ordered to attack Vladsloo, and the Marine Fusiliers were to move against Beerst. The 11th and 12th Regiments of the Line were ordered to occupy the bridge-head of Dixmude. This offensive movement was at first successful; Beerst and Vladsloo were occupied, when information was received to the effect that strong German columns of all arms had debouched to the north and to the south of Roulers, and that the Franco-British cavalry which was operating in that region was retreating. This was judged to render the position of the Marine Fusiliers and of the 5th Division, on the right bank, too exposed, and these troops were accordingly recalled to the left bank of the Yser.

Except for a violent bombardment of the whole front, the only important incident on the 20th was a double attack carried out at the two extremities of the line. The most determined attack was that which was directed, from 6 A.M. onwards, against Lombaertzyde and the farm of Bamburgh, east of Nieuport. By evening these two posts had been lost, but the enemy had been unable to debouch from them. The situation had, however, become serious on account of the very heavy artillery and infantry fire. At the other end of the line, near Dixmude, an attack which had taken place in the afternoon was repulsed.

During this time the concentration of the enemy's forces was completed. They were thus echeloned in front of the Belgian Army: the 4th Ersatz Division was opposite Nieuport; the 3rd Reserve Corps, from Nieuport to Keyem; the 22nd Reserve Corps, north of Dixmude; lastly, the 23rd Reserve Corps at Dixmude and to the south—making in all a total of seven divisions opposed to the Belgian Army.

In presence of such a gathering of forces it became necessary that the exact front to be held should be clearly defined. The Belgian and French Headquarters Staffs agreed that the defence by the Belgian Army of the line of the Yser should not go beyond St. Jacques Capelle, which meant holding a front of 12½ miles. At the same time steps were taken to complete the defence of the line towards the south by French troops, to prevent the flank of the Army being turned on its right.

During the night of the 20th/21st, and all day on the 21st, the whole front was subjected to an extremely violent bombardment. The German artillery fire was directed now against the first lines, now against the ground in rear of these, so as to make it impossible for reserves to be moved up into the firing line; certain trenches were entirely destroyed. There was little infantry fighting. Near Dixmude, however, violent night attacks were launched from Beerst on the 12th Regiment of the Line. Alternating with heavy shell-fire, the assaults were continued in the afternoon, and were so persistent that two battalions of the 5th Division had to be called up to support the defence of this point. At one moment the trenches of the bridge-head, south of Dixmude, were lost, but a counter-attack recovered them.

At the end of the day, on the 21st, the general situation of the Army was critical, since it had had to put in the greater part of its reserves in order to hold its positions. Towards the end of the night of the 21st/22nd the first serious incident of the battle occurred. Under cover of the darkness the enemy gained possession of a temporary bridge thrown near Tervaete, and got across to the left bank. A series of counter-attacks failed to drive back the enemy on to the right bank; they were carried out in the afternoon by the 2nd and 4th Regiments of the Line, belonging to the 1st Division, and by the 8th Line Regiment of the 4th Division, supported by the Grenadiers and the Carbineers. A battalion of Grenadiers, however, succeeded in reaching the Yser dyke, but, being insufficiently supported, had to retire during the following night. These offensive actions were very costly in lives, and greatly used up the troops taking part in them. The enemy succeeded in consolidating his positions on the west bank of the river, and in deploying infantry there, supported by numerous machine-guns.

However, the Belgian Artillery never ceased shelling the bend of the river in order to render the position untenable for the enemy, and to prevent him from throwing foot-bridges across. All attempts made by the enemy to cross the river elsewhere failed signally. A determined attack on the Schoorbakke bridge-head was repulsed during the morning, and violent assaults were unable to dislodge the 4th Line Regiment, which was holding this position. On both ends of the front the bombardment was continuous. Before Nieuport, a withdrawal of the German troops was taken advantage of for an advance towards Lombaertzyde and the farm of Bamburgh ; the 1st Regiment of Rifles and the 9th Line Regiment carried this operation out successfully. At Dixmude it was apparent that the desperate fighting of the previous day, which, moreover, had been resumed during part of the night, had weakened the enemy. On the 23rd a French reinforcement, the 42nd Division, arrived on the scene, but was directed on Nieuport to assume the offensive in that sector.

The centre of the front, about the bend of Tervaete, where the enemy was concentrating all his efforts, remained without succour, and the situation there soon became critical. During the night the bridge-head of Schoorbakke had had to be abandoned, the battalion which was holding it having been enfiladed. The bridge was blown up just as German troops were approaching it to cross. The Headquarters Staff ordered the chord of the arc to be held at all costs by clinging to every inch of the ground. In the whole extent of the bend the troops, supported by all the Belgian reserves available, resisted the artillery and machine-gun fire. Whenever they fell back their leaders took them forward again. In the evening the supporting positions which had been prepared along the chord of the bend were still occupied, but it was reported that ' the troops are exhausted and shaken in moral, so that the slightest incident may cause them to be seized with panic.' The various corps were considerably reduced in strength ; the 1st Regiment of Carbineers, for instance, only numbered six officers and 325 men. At Dixmude the commander of the brigade also reported that his men were very fatigued. Before St. Georges, the 7th Line Regiment, which occupied trenches at that place which had been continuously attacked since the battle began, was relieved by the 14th

Line Regiment. At the end of the day, the Army Command, considering the situation opposite the bend to be grave, addressed to the French Army Command a definite request for intervention in the centre of the Belgian front. 'Energetic action on the part of as great a number as possible, of the troops of the 42nd Division (engaged on the Nieuport side) can,' it was stated, 'still save the situation.' In the night the commander of the French troops in Belgium decided to comply, in part, with this request, and sent a brigade of the 42nd Division to operate in the bend. It was to come into action on the 24th, at dawn.

While on the 24th efforts were being made to restore order amongst the units which had become mixed up in the course of the numerous attacks, the centre was ordered to hold out to the last extremity, so as to give time for the French intervention to take effect. The enemy, however, displayed extraordinary activity in this region, so that the Belgian troops were forced to retire and to defend the line of the Beverdyk. A French counter-attack failed to throw the enemy back. Before St. Georges, the 14th Line Regiment, subjected to an extremely violent bombardment, and having had its right flank turned, was obliged to retire behind the Noord-Vaart, after having repulsed numerous attacks.

At the southern end the enemy attempted a supreme effort on Dixmude. During the night he made furious attacks against the defenders of the town; fifteen assaults were delivered, and all were repulsed by the Belgian troops and by the French Marine Fusiliers. During the day the attacks were renewed, and the trenches south of the bridge-head had to be given up, but soon the Belgian troops were brought back to their positions and the enemy's offensive was broken. Here also the troops were completely exhausted and not a man was left available in reserve, so that reliefs could no longer be organised; one Belgian battalion was seventy-two hours in the trenches, two others forty-three hours. In view of all these circumstances the Belgian Army Command insisted that French reinforcements should be sent to remedy the situation in the centre of the Belgian line, and it was decided that this should be done next day, when almost the whole 42nd Division was ordered from the left wing to support the centre.

The 25th October was marked by a distinct pause in the enemy's onslaught. The bombardment was less violent, and the few infantry attacks which were undertaken were feebly conducted; thus there were evident signs of the enemy's exhaustion. At the same time the German forces successfully resisted an attack from Oud-Stuyvekenskerke on their left flank by a French brigade and the 5th Belgian Division. That evening the Army had maintained its positions on the Noord-Vaart and the Beverdyk, while beyond it still held Oud-Stuyvekenskerke and the Yser dyke from kilometre 15, and retained the Nieuport and Dixmude bridge-heads. The comparative calm allowed units to be reconstituted and order restored in them. The number of men disabled was considerable. 'By 6 P.M.,' says a report, '9145 wounded had been evacuated by rail; the number of wounded in hospital on the spot, increased by the number of deaths during transit from the battle-field to the evacuating railway stations, is estimated at 1000. To these figures must be added the number of dead on the battle-field, of the wounded not recovered, and of the missing.'

In the course of the day the Headquarters Staff went into the question of a retirement to the line of the Nieuport-Dixmude railway embankment, and considered the necessity of constructing an important obstacle in the front of this line of defence. A plan was worked out for inundating the area lying between the above embankment and the Yser dyke, and, with a view to this, dams were ordered to be constructed across the aqueducts which pass under the embankment. All that then remained necessary was to open, at Nieuport, the sluices giving access towards the Beverdyk, and to shut them at low tide, in order to submerge successively all the ground on which the German lines were being developed.

On the 26th a new factor began to aggravate the situation. Since the beginning of the battle of the Yser the Belgian guns and howitzers had been continuously in action, trying by their constant fire to make up for the weakness of the Army in men, and to counterbalance the superiority of the enemy in heavy artillery. The strenuous use made of the artillery rendered many pieces unserviceable, and reduced the available ammunition to such a point that the batteries now had only one hundred rounds per gun left.

In the early hours of the morning, on the left as well as in the centre of the front, the line of the Beverdyk had to be abandoned under the violent pressure of the enemy, who was able to enfilade the positions of the defence. The line of the railway was ordered to be held at all costs. At various points the exhausted troops could only resist the attacks, which were made by night and by day, at the cost of considerable losses; here and there they gave way and abandoned the line, but were able to regain it and to cling to it afterwards. On the right wing, round Dixmude, the troops, kept on the alert by continual attacks, reached the extreme limit of their physical and moral resistance; two battalions of Senegalese arrived in time to relieve the most worn-out of the defenders. That evening the bridge-head of Nieuport was still successfully held, as well as the railway from Nieuport to Mark 4; the line then passed towards Oud-Stuyvekenskerke and joined the Yser dyke near Mark 16, following it as far as the Dixmude bridge-head. The Army Command, in order to meet every eventuality, disposed the two Cavalry Divisions at the various bridges over the canal, from Furnes to Loo.

In contrast to the 26th, the 27th and 28th October passed in comparative calm. There was a violent but intermittent cannonade, directed partly against the positions, partly against the ground in rear of the railway, and the few attacks which were made were repulsed successfully. The enemy's activity was more apparent than real. The respite was taken advantage of to withdraw the second line units (3rd and 6th Divisions) which had become merged in the firing line, and thus to reconstitute reserves. The preparatory work on the inundations having been completed, the sluices of the Beverdyk were opened at Nieuport, and from the 28th the waters began to rise opposite the front of the 2nd Division.

The enemy's activity was renewed on the 29th. A heavy bombardment and violent attacks were directed against the 1st, 2nd, and 4th Divisions. The inundations spread all along the front of the 2nd Division and gained ground towards the south. The attacks became more persistent on the 30th, both on the left and on the centre of the line, but were everywhere repulsed, except opposite Ramscapelle, where the enemy, throwing bombs into the trenches, gained a footing

on the railway, and pushed forward to the village. This was the only point at which the line was pierced. A counter-attack, preceded by violent preparatory artillery fire, was made against Ramscapelle, in the afternoon and during the following night, by the 6th Line Regiment, a battalion of the 7th, a battalion of the 14th, and two French battalions. It was entirely successful, the Ramscapelle wayside station being reoccupied by the Belgian and French troops, so that the line of defence was reconstituted as before.

On the other parts of the front the enemy showed no more activity whatever, and the bombardment diminished in intensity. Everywhere the inundations continued to progress, and already made the trenches between the railway embankment and the Yser dyke untenable by the enemy in many places. The Battle of the Yser was over. The enemy's advance had been stopped, and soon he only held a few centres of resistance on the left bank of the Yser. He retired, abandoning wounded, arms, and ammunition.

But the losses of the Belgian Army had been very serious, amounting to 14,000 men killed and wounded. The infantry was reduced from 48,000 to 32,000 rifles, and more than half the guns of the artillery were temporarily unserviceable. This long and heroic resistance broke the onslaught of seven German Divisions, inflicting considerable losses on them, and rendering them incapable of further action for a long while, and time was thus gained which allowed of the Franco-British front being strongly established to the south, and of a barrier being set up against which all the German attacks were to come to nothing during the great battles round Ypres at the end of October and during the first fortnight in November.

During the two succeeding months the operations on the Yser front were confined to slow gains or losses of ground. On the 3rd November, Belgian reconnaissances advanced as far as Lombaertzyde ; one of them crossed the Yser south of St. Georges and reached the outskirts of Mannekensvere on the right bank. On the other wing the French tried to enlarge the Dixmude bridge-head. On the 4th November, Belgian forces attacked Lombaertzyde and occupied it, but a violent counter-attack, made at nightfall, drove them back to the Nieuport bridge-head, where the assailants, however,

were unable to gain a footing. On the 8th and 10th November, the attempt was renewed by the 81st French Territorial Division, which got up to within 200 metres of the German trenches and there established itself. Attacks made simultaneously on St. Georges, Schoorbakke, and Tervaete were not productive of substantial gain, the approaches to the enemy's positions having to be made by the existing narrow passages through the inundations. Commencing on the 9th a new attempt was made by the enemy against Dixmude. The ruins of the town and its approaches towards Caeskerke were first subjected to an uninterrupted shell-fire. On the 10th at noon, after a bombardment of the trenches, an assault succeeded in breaking through the line. The 1st Line Regiment and the French Marine Fusiliers defended themselves most stubbornly. At 6.15 P.M. the enemy reached the Yser, but he was unable to get any farther. The capture of the ruins of Dixmude marked the end of the enemy's offensive operations, and he thereafter confined himself to an intermittent bombardment of the ground adjoining the Yser. This cannonade was sometimes extended as far as Furnes, which is $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles in rear of the river.

The activity of the Belgian Army during this period was principally manifested by reconnaissances and by pushing forward small bodies of infantry across the inundations to the little islands formed by isolated farms. Towards the middle of December a more serious operation resulted in the occupation of St. Georges, which had remained in the enemy's hands. A French mixed force, supported by portions of the Belgian 2nd and 4th Divisions, began the attack on the Lombaertzyde side. At the same time the other Belgian divisions in first line pushed reconnaissances in force towards the various points occupied by the enemy. The attack progressed slowly under a continuous bombardment. On the left, ground was gained step by step, till on the 16th the front of attack extended to the sea. During the night of the 16th-17th, the French troops repulsed, at Lombaertzyde, seven determined attacks of the enemy, and on the 18th they were able to establish themselves definitively at 100 metres from the German positions. They also gradually approached St. Georges, which they captured on the 28th December. At the end of 1914, the enemy held on the left bank of the Yser

only a few listening and observation posts, scattered in the flooded plain.

General Summary

Up to the moment when, on the night of the 3rd to the 4th August, more than twenty-four hours after the receipt of the German threatening Note, Belgium had become certain that Germany was about to violate her frontiers, the Belgian Army remained distributed in the country in accordance with the military exigencies dictated by the neutrality of Belgium ; one advanced guard division faced towards England, two others towards France, and a fourth towards Germany.

The violation of Belgian neutrality imposed on Belgium certain obligations ; the corresponding measures were decreed immediately. The plan of defence, the realisation of which was pursued throughout by the Army Command with resolution and consistency, was in strict accord with the undertaking which Belgium had on the 4th August assumed towards the guaranteeing Powers, namely, to organise with the forces of these latter, 'both concerted action and joint operations, with a view to safeguarding the independence and the integrity of the country.' This plan consisted, in the face of the very superior hostile forces, in denying, at all times, as great a portion as possible of Belgian territory to the invader, and in establishing the Army, for this purpose, on such defensive lines as would enable resistance to be offered under favourable conditions, in concert with the forces of the guaranteeing Powers. At the same time the plan aimed at avoiding the exposure of the Army, guardian of the Nation, to certain loss, if the junction with those forces should not have been effected before the arrival of the enemy's masses. It was only on the Yser that the junction with the Armies of the guaranteeing Powers was able to be effected, and that a continuous line of defence was constituted. By that time almost the whole territory was in the hands of the invaders, but the Field Army had remained intact and was ready for a stubborn resistance in joint operations. At the critical moment of the campaign, on the 18th August, when it became necessary to abandon the position on the Gette, as on the 6th October when the retreat towards Flanders had to be undertaken, and similarly during the retreat itself, the decisions arrived at were in all

cases inspired by these leading principles of the plan of defence.

The Field Army was at all times confronted by hostile forces considerably superior both in numbers and in armament, except before Antwerp from the 22nd August to the 25th September, and yet, on the Gette, about the middle of August, as at Antwerp in the beginning of October, it held on to its positions up to the extreme limit compatible with its preservation, thus affording to the Armies of the guaranteeing Powers the maximum of time in which to come to its aid. When the Belgian Field Army took up its position on the line of the Yser, the only diminution its fighting strength had suffered after two and a half months of war, was due to the losses incurred on the battle-field; no single formed unit had been captured by the enemy.

Before Antwerp, from the 22nd August to the 25th September, the Belgian Army devoted itself to lightening the task of the Armies of the guaranteeing Powers. During that period it took advantage of every favourable opportunity to attack the army of observation which was opposed to it. It constantly detained in its front hostile forces at least its equal in strength, and often its superior, at moments when their support was urgently required in the principal theatre of war.

After a retreat of nearly ninety miles, when the junction had been effected on the Yser, the Belgian Army, with the support of a French brigade, subsequently reinforced by a division, was able to break the violent efforts of an army of 150,000 men on a defensive front, which, by this decisive resistance, it has rendered safe from further attack.

Lastly, the Army Command, also in accordance with the engagements assumed by Belgium, organised the defence of the fortresses of Liège, Namur, and Antwerp. But the besiegers, owing to the power of their artillery, possessed so great a superiority that the fortified positions were unable to offer a prolonged resistance.

Thus, from whatever point of view the operations of the Belgian Army, during the period under review, are considered, it may be claimed that Belgium as scrupulously fulfilled the obligations imposed by her neutrality, when once it had been trampled on, as she had adhered to them while still sheltered under the guarantee of the Treaties.

SECOND BELGIAN GREY BOOK[1]

SECOND PART—SECTION I.

GERMAN ACCUSATIONS IN REGARD TO THE ATTITUDE OF THE BELGIAN CIVIL POPULATION

No. 68

M. Davignon, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to the Belgian Ministers at The Hague, London, Paris, and Madrid

Brussels, August 12, 1914.

Please inform the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the press that the Belgian Government indignantly protests against the assertion of the Wolff Bureau that the inhabitants of the district of Liège have taken part in the fighting, that others have lain in ambush and shot German doctors who were attending to wounded men, and that wounded men have been cruelly treated.

Belgium is scrupulously observing The Hague Convention on the Laws and Customs of War, of which she was a signatory. The Government has reminded the population that civilians must abstain absolutely from the use of their arms against the invaders, and that only the army and militia forces which fulfil the necessary conditions have that right and duty.

(Signed) DAVIGNON.

No. 69

M. Davignon, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to Baron Grenier, Belgian Minister at Madrid

Antwerp, August 18, 1914.

SIR,—Be so good as to request the Minister of Foreign Affairs kindly to communicate the enclosed protest from the Belgian Government to the Imperial German Government.

(Signed) DAVIGNON.

[1] [Translated from the Belgian Government's *Correspondance Diplomatique relative à la Guerre de* 1914-1915, Part 2. The *First Belgian Grey Book* appears in *Diplomatic*, 2. The *Second Grey Book* is given in *Diplomatic*, 3. Only those sections of the second part of this which have a military character are given here; sections vii. and xvi. have already appeared in *Military*, 1.]

ENCLOSURE TO NO. 69

Note

Belgium, which desired peace, has been compelled by Germany to take up arms and legitimately to defend herself against an attack that was unjustifiable and contrary to the solemn engagements of treaties. She considers it a point of honour to carry on the struggle loyally and to observe all the Laws and Customs of War. From the moment of the entry of German troops into her territory the Belgian Government has had posted in every commune, and the newspapers have published every day, orders forbidding non-combatant civilians to commit any act of warfare against the troops and the military invading the country. The information on which the German Government believes it can rely to justify its assertion that the Belgian population is contravening the laws of nations and is quite unworthy of respect, is certainly false. The Government enters the most earnest protest against the truth of the allegations which have been advanced, and against the odious threats of reprisals.

If some particular act which is contrary to the laws of war were to be ultimately established, it would be proper in order to appreciate it justly to make allowance for the legitimate state of nervousness which the cruelties committed by the German soldiers have provoked among the Belgian people, a people which is thoroughly honourable, but vigorous in the defence of its rights and in its respect for humanity. Long indeed would already be the list of these atrocities, of which we are collecting the first, were we now to publish it.

Whole regions have been ravaged, and abominable crimes committed in their villages.

A Committee appointed by the Ministry of Justice is drawing up a catalogue of these horrors with scrupulous impartiality.

The following may be quoted as examples illustrating the state of mind and the conduct of various German troops:—

(1) A troop of Uhlans occupying Linsmeau was attacked by some infantry and by two policemen employed as sharpshooters. A German officer was killed. The German soldiers thought that the officer had been attacked by civilians. This

is absolutely incorrect; the Belgian officers knew that the German officer had been killed by their men, and they had given the burgomaster of Linsmeau the order to bury the German officer. This point was specially investigated at the inquiry, and it was established beyond all possible doubt that the inhabitants of Linsmeau scrupulously abstained from any act of hostility. The burgomaster of Linsmeau vouched for this over and over again to the officer in command of the German troops.

But in vain. The village was invaded in the evening of Monday, August 10th, by a great number of Uhlans, followed by artillery, and machine-guns. They opened fire on two farms and six or seven houses, and destroyed and burnt them down.

They forced all the male inhabitants of the village to leave their houses and give up their arms. They did not find one that had recently been fired. Nevertheless, they divided the men into three groups. The men of one of these groups were tied with ropes. Eleven of these peasants were placed in a ditch, where they were found with their heads battered in by the butt ends of rifles. All of them were dead. The others were made to walk between horses into the country under the constant threat of being shot. They were finally released with the threat that the village would be completely destroyed if any of them left his house at night.

(2) During the night of Monday, August 10th, great numbers of Uhlans went to Velm. The inhabitants were asleep. The Germans, without any provocation whatever, fired on the house of M. Deglimme-Gevers, then broke in and destroyed the furniture, and stole what money they could find.

They set fire to the barn, the crops, the agricultural implements; six oxen and the poultry were burnt to death. They took away M. Deglimme-Gevers' wife half naked to a distance of over a mile from the house, let her go, and then fired on her but did not hit her. They took the husband in another direction and put three bullets into him. He is now in a dying condition.

The same Uhlans also sacked and burnt the house of the level-crossing watchman.

(3) At the agency of the National Bank at Liège, German

troops have seized 400,000 francs' worth of unstamped five-franc notes which ought not to have been stamped except by order of the Directors of the Bank in Brussels. The die was at the printer's. The German authorities ordered the notes to be stamped, and they are now using them.

(4) The following communication was received from Haekendevez, on August the 14th, 1914, by the officer in command of the 1st D.A. at Cumptich :—

Record of information which has been collected in regard to the conduct of German cavalry at Orsmael and Neerhespen on the 10th, 11th, and 12th of August :—

(1) Facts sworn to by the farmer Jef Dierickx of Neerhespen.

An old man of the district has had his arm cut into three parts longitudinally, and was then hung up by the feet and burnt alive.

Certain persons in Orsmael have had their sexual organs removed ; young girls and children have been violated.

A wounded rifleman-cyclist who had been made prisoner was hanged, and the Belgian soldier who was looking after him was put up against a telegraph-post along the road to Saint-Trond and shot.

No. 70

From the Belgian Minister at Madrid to M. Davignon, Minister of Foreign Affairs

Madrid, October 6, 1914.

SIR,—I have duly executed the instructions contained in your letter of August 18, and have requested the Minister of State to communicate to the German Government the protest of the Belgian Government against the inhuman behaviour of the German troops. His Excellency has just told me that the Spanish Ambassador in Berlin had informed him that immediately after receiving this communication he had forwarded it to the German Minister of Foreign Affairs.

(Signed) BARON GRENIER.

No. 71

M. Davignon, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to all the Diplomatic Representatives abroad

Havre, December 30, 1914.

SIR,—The German authorities have repeatedly accused the Belgian civil population of having everywhere organised in a systematic and odious way armed resistance to all the operations of the German troops in Belgium. The Committee of Inquiry, in several of their reports, entirely demolished the fantastic stories which the Germans have tried to make foreign countries believe, with the object of justifying their own misdeeds. But the German Government has gone further; it has had the effrontery to maintain that the Belgian Government itself had organised this resistance on the part of the civilian population.

The Emperor of Germany declared this *urbi et orbi* in his telegram to President Wilson[1]: 'They (the Allies) have not only made use of abominable weapons of war (dum-dum bullets) but the Belgian Government have openly stirred up the whole civilian population which had been long preparing for the struggle, and in which even women and priests took part.'

[1] [Cf. *Military*, I p. 201]

Afterwards details were supplied. The German Legation at Bukarest sent to the press in August last a communication relative to the destruction of the town of Louvain, which says: '*The Belgian Government had long ago organised a rising* against any enemy that might invade their territory. They had arranged stores of arms, *where each rifle bore the name of the citizen for whom it was destined.* . . . This attack (at Louvain) was all the more odious since *it had clearly been prepared beforehand* and took place at the same time as the sortie from Antwerp. . . .'

Not long ago the German press raised this question again. These accusations must not remain unanswered, however absurd they may seem, at first sight, to any impartial person.

As early as August 18 I requested the Spanish Government to protest against them in Berlin. I sent you a copy, on August the 21st, of the Note sent to the German Government. I called attention to the circulars and placards which

had been posted in all the communes of Belgium at the beginning of hostilities in order to deter the inhabitants from any act of hostility against the enemy. The reproduction of these circulars and posters issued by our Ministry of the Interior and by our communal authorities might still at this moment be useful in certain countries.

The Minister of the Interior has on this subject sent the Note of which I enclose herewith a copy.

In it you will find all the information necessary for giving a formal denial to the German accusations. I leave it to you to decide when to publish such denials. Circumstances will guide you as to the best use you can make of the information contained in the note transmitted to me by M. Berryer.

I should be obliged to you if you would inform me what action you decide to take. (Signed) DAVIGNON.

ENCLOSURE TO No. 71

Note

To justify their misdeeds in Belgium, and to excuse in the eyes of the civilised world their infamous attack on a Power so manifestly peace-loving as Belgium, Germany is now seeking by every means to spread abroad the vilest calumnies against our country. After having violated our neutrality with the most brazen cynicism, she is now trying to send down to history the absurd fable that our country had already taken sides against Germany before the beginning of the war.

The whole of the diplomatic history of our country is an answer to this calumny.

It may nevertheless serve a useful purpose to recall what care the Government devoted to the maintenance of the strictest neutrality down to the very eve of war, *even to the moment* when that neutrality was about to be violated by one of the Powers that had formally guaranteed it.

On Saturday, August 1, 1914, M. Berryer, Minister of the Interior, addressed the following telegram to the Governors of the Provinces :

In the midst of the events that are developing, Belgium is determined to defend her neutrality ; it ought to be respected, but it is the duty of the nation to take whatever measures to that end the situation may require. It is

therefore important that the population should co-operate with the Government by avoiding *any manifestation that might be of a nature to bring the country into difficulties with one or other of its neighbours* ; thus the Burgomasters should at once take steps to forbid all meetings that might have the object *of showing sympathy or antipathy for one country or another.* It is also important that, in accordance with Article 97 of the municipal law, the Burgomaster and aldermen should prohibit any cinematograph exhibition which represents military scenes likely to arouse passion and to provoke popular excitement dangerous to the public order. Please take immediate steps to have these instructions carried out without delay.

PAUL BERRYER,
Minister of the Interior.

Effect was at once given to the appeal of the Minister of the Interior. The Burgomasters hastened to take measures in accordance with the instructions contained in his circular. On Sunday, August 2, some hours before the ultimatum, M. Carton de Wiart, Minister of Justice, the King's Attorney in Brussels, had the newspaper *Le Petit Bleu* confiscated for definitely taking sides with one of the belligerents, in this case France. All the laws of warfare have been violated by Germany. She does not now even seek to excuse herself, but, realising that certain laws of humanity cannot be broken without incurring universal reprobation, she is again having recourse to calumny. Vaguely, and without any shadow of proof, she declares that the murder, pillage, and incendiarism of which she has been guilty are justified by the participation of the Belgian civilian population in acts of hostility.

And to make such a general statement credible without proofs, she alleges the existence of a regular system, organised by her adversaries, and in so many words accuses the Belgian Government of having armed the civilian population and of having incited them to take part in the struggle. In order to refute this facile allegation, which, if only superficial minds would accept it as true, would have the advantage of relieving the accusers of all necessity to produce specific proof, it suffices to give the real facts. On August 4, when war had been declared on us, and the enemy had already set foot on our soil, the Minister of the Interior, M. Berryer, sent an explicit

circular to the 2600 communes of the country concerning the duties of the authorities and the attitude of the civilian population. The following is an extract :

'According to the laws of war, acts of hostility, that is, any resistance and attack by arms, or the use of arms against isolated soldiers of the enemy, or direct intervention in fights or skirmishes, *are never permitted to those who do not belong to the army or the Garde Civique, or to volunteer corps under military law, obeying a recognised head and wearing a visible distinctive badge.*

'If the population of a territory that has not yet been occupied by the enemy spontaneously takes arms on the approach of the invader without having had time to provide itself with a military organisation, it will be deemed a belligerent body if it carries arms openly and conforms to the laws of war. Isolated individuals who do not belong to any of these categories, and who commit an act of hostility, would not be considered belligerents. If made prisoners, they are liable to be treated more severely than a prisoner of war, and might even be put to death.

'The inhabitants are still more earnestly enjoined to abstain from acts that are prohibited even to soldiers : these acts are more particularly the use of poison or poisoned arms, the treacherous killing or wounding of individuals belonging to the army or nation of the invader, the killing or wounding of an enemy who, after giving up his arms and depriving himself of the means of self-defence, has surrendered unconditionally.'

The first German authorities to penetrate into the town of Liège must certainly have read the notices which had already been posted by the Burgomaster of that city, M. Kleyer, on August the 5th, which are identical in terms with the circular of the Minister of the Interior.

The text of a poster which the Burgomaster of Brussels, M. Max, had posted on the walls of the city is subjoined as an example.

CITY OF BRUSSELS

Fire-Arms

The laws of war *forbid the civil population to take part in hostilities*, and as any infringement of this rule may

be the cause of reprisals, many of my fellow-citizens have expressed a desire to get rid of the fire-arms in their possession. *These arms may be deposited at the police stations, where a receipt for them will be given.* They will be placed in safe custody at the central Arsenal at Antwerp, and will be returned to their owners at the end of the war.

ADOLPHE MAX,
Burgomaster.

Everywhere communal authorities took the same precautions, either by proclamations addressed to the population or, what was even better, by providing that all arms should be deposited at the town halls or police stations.

Moreover, one of the first measures taken by the Germans in the occupied regions was to repeat this same order with the addition of threats of capital punishment.

Nevertheless, this measure of extreme prudence, which exposed defenceless victims to the rage of the invaders, has with incredible bad faith been itself used as a weapon against us. Ignominy cannot reach greater depths than this. A *communiqué* from the German Legation at Bukarest, which was published in the *Indépendance Roumaine* of the 21st August (5th September) 1914, charges the Belgian Government not only with having given the civilian population instructions with a view to resistance and with having organised beforehand a rising against any enemy that invaded our territory, 'but especially with having organised depots of arms where every rifle bore the name of the citizen for whom it was intended.' Does not this last detail prove to demonstration that the arms referred to were those which had been collected from private individuals and were intended to be returned to them? In arsenals it is not usual to mark the arms beforehand with the names of the soldiers who are to bear them. . . .

By such contradictions and absurdities falsehood stands unmistakably revealed.

While the Belgian communal authorities were thus, in accordance with the instructions of their Government, taking the most efficacious measures for preventing the civilian population from giving way to their instinct to repel by any means a powerful and ferocious enemy who was threatening their homes, the Minister of the Interior was at pains

daily to repeat semi-officially through the channel of the press of all parties throughout the country, in large type in a conspicuous position, the following recommendations :—

To the Civil Population

The Minister of the Interior recommends all civilians inhabiting a district in which the enemy makes his appearance :

Not to fight :

Not to use insulting language or threats :

To stay indoors and to shut the windows so that it cannot be said that there has been any provocation.

If the soldiers occupy a house or isolated hamlet for the purpose of defence, to evacuate it, so that it cannot be said that shots were fired by civilians.

Any act of violence committed by a single civilian would be a veritable crime contrary to the law and punishable by imprisonment, because it might serve as a pretext for sanguinary repression, pillage, and the massacre of innocent persons and of women and children.

Finally, shortly before the capture of Antwerp on September 30, 1914, when that part of the country which had not yet been invaded seemed to be in danger, the Minister of the Interior once more sent out a circular in French, Flemish, and German to all the communes, so that nobody should be ignorant of, and that the German authorities themselves might know, the recommendations which had been issued by the Government to the communal authorities and to the civil population.

This has not prevented the German papers from saying again quite recently that everywhere and always in Belgium (the definiteness of this statement should be noted) the civilian population have borne arms against German soldiers, and that, since the beginning of the war, the Government has done nothing to prevent them.

SECTION IV

BOMBARDMENT BY ZEPPELINS

No. 75

M. Davignon, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to the Belgian Ministers in Paris, London, St. Petersburg, The Hague, Rome, and Washington

(Telegraphic.) *Antwerp, August* 25, 1914.

During the night of the 24th-25th, a dirigible balloon of the Zeppelin type flew at a low altitude over the town of Antwerp and dropped in succession eight bombs of great explosive force. The Police inquiry showed that there were ten killed, all innocent civilians, of whom four were women, and eight wounded, some of them mortally. The material damage is considerable. This bombardment constitutes a violation of Article 26 of the Fourth Hague Convention of 1907.

(Signed) DAVIGNON.

No. 76

M. Davignon, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to the Diplomatic Representatives of Foreign Powers in Belgium

Antwerp, August 26, 1914.

The Belgian Government has the honour of acquainting the Legations of the Foreign Powers in Belgium with the facts set forth in the enclosed note, which constitute on the part of the German authorities a violation of Article 26 of the Fourth Hague Convention of 1907.

ENCLOSURE TO No. 76

Antwerp, August 25, 1914.

The Court of First Instance,
sitting at Antwerp.

To the Procurator-General.

SIR,—I have the honour to submit a report on the grave events of last night.

M. Baucarne, advocate, M. de Duve, of 65 rue du Péage,

and my colleague, M. Michielsen, agree in declaring that a Zeppelin airship came over the town from the direction of the manœuvre ground. It dropped successively bombs of great explosive force:—(1) on a glass house belonging to the Minerva factory; (2) on a house in the rue Lozane; (3) rue Verdussen; (4) rue de la Justice; (5) rue des Escrimeurs; (6) rue Léopold; (7) rue des Douze-Mois; (8) rue du Poids Public.

The evidence above mentioned shows that this itinerary is probably correct. M. Michielsen declares that, after having reached a certain point, the airship returned in the same direction whence it came.

The damage done is of two kinds.

Several people were killed and wounded. The material damage done is considerable. *In the 8th section*, M. Léon Peeters and his wife, Sylvie Hurnaux, living at 29 rue Verbissem (*sic*) were slightly wounded. At 40 rue des Escrimeurs, a servant was killed and another one dangerously wounded. *In the 2nd section* (Poids Public), the number of victims is very large. This is the list:—

(1) Van Catthem, Jean-Jaques, policeman, *dead*, 112 Marché aux Chevaux.
(2) Jensen, Jean-François, *dead*, 20 Poids Public.
(3) De Bruyn, Jeanne-Marie, innkeeper, 4 Poids Public, *dead*.
(4) Van Ecke, Arthur, dock labourer, 4 Poids Public, *dead*.
(5) De Backer, Pierre, dock labourer, 20 Canal Falcon, *dead*.
(6) Ramaekers, Hubertine - Edouard - Marie, 13 Poids Public, *dead*.
(7) Van Vooren, Josephe-Marie, 69 Marché aux Chevaux, mortally wounded.
(8) Gaethof, Pierre-Jean, policeman, 36 rue du Jardinier, wounded.
(9) Devos, Marie-Thérèse, housewife, 20 Poids Public, wounded.
(10) Coeymans, Léon, innkeeper, 1 Poids Public, wounded.
(11) Peynenberg, Jacques-Germain, printer, 38 Canal Falcon, wounded.

(12) De Poeter, Georges, 1 Poids Public, wounded in the right foot.
(13) Wilsenen, Sophie, 4 Poids Public, slightly wounded in the hip.
(14) Windey, Auguste, 4 Poids Public, loss of right eye.
(15) Luyckx, Eulalie, 6 Poids Public, wounded.
(16) Roulandts, Julia, 24 rue du Bassin, wounded.

The material damage in the 8th section is :

38 and 40 rue des Escrimeurs : the entire roof and the attics destroyed, windows broken, furniture and household utensils damaged. 34 and 36 rue des Escrimeurs, windows broken.

Palais de Justice : numbers of windows broken.

Rue de la Justice : at no. 13, a lower room damaged ; no. 15 etc., doors and windows broken; at nos. 15 and 8 the lower rooms have been damaged ; rue Mertens, no. 14 etc., windows broken ; rue Willems, no. 9 etc., windows broken ; rue Torf, rue de Mey, rue Montebello, rue de l'Harmonie, windows broken ; rue Verdussen, no. 20 etc., windows broken, doors and windows damaged ; rue Albert von Bary, no. 1 etc., windows broken ; rue Longue, rue Lausanne, no. 242 etc., windows broken, doors and windows damaged ; avenue du Marcgrave, no. 188, three blocks damaged ; rue Karel Ooms, no. 40, windows broken and walls cracked ; rue Karel Ooms, no. 45, windows broken (Minerva).

The damage done by the airship in the 3rd section can be summed up as follows :

A bomb exploded in the rue Léopold, close to the rue Guillaume Tell, breaking all the windows of the china shop at the corner of the rue Guillaume Tell, all the windows of the second floor, and destroying a large quantity of goods in the shop, the windows of the café Shakespeare, at present occupied by refugees from the province. Nobody was wounded.

Another bomb exploded in the rue des Douze-Mois, partly demolishing no. 11, where one person was slightly wounded, and whence at about 4.45 A.M., a woman was rescued, who complained of internal pain and was sent to the Institute Saint-Jean-Berchmanns, Place de Meir.

Damage was also done to nos. 19, 7, 28 of the same street.

The Botanical Garden was found to have suffered im-

portant material damage, notably among the glass houses and frames of the Botanical Museum; this damage was caused by the bomb dropped near the rue Guillaume Tell, or perhaps by another bomb which, according to certain witnesses, was dropped in the Botanical Garden itself, quite near to the wall of the Sainte-Elizabeth hospital.

(Signed) ANGENOT,
Deputy Procurator-General.

SECTION VIII

EMPLOYMENT OF NATIVES WHO HAVE NO REGULAR MILITARY ORGANIZATION

No. 90

M. Davignon, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to Baron Grenier, Belgian Minister at Madrid

(Telegram.) *Ostend, October* 12, 1914.

The Vice-Governor of Katanga telegraphs that the Germans are employing against the troops of the Belgian Congo natives led by their chiefs and entirely uninstructed in the Laws and Customs of War. As black troops which have not been properly trained and are not under the command of white officers are capable of committing the worst excesses, the Belgian Government protests against their employment.

Please bring this protest to the knowledge of the Spanish Government, and request that the German Government may be informed that the Belgian Government, in accordance with the rules of international law, refuses to treat as belligerents hordes of negroes led by native chiefs.

(Signed) DAVIGNON.

No. 91

The Belgian Minister at Madrid to M. Davignon, Minister of Foreign Affairs

Madrid, October[1] (*sic*) 13, 1914.

SIR,—I have duly carried out the instructions contained in your telegram of the 12th of October last concerning the

[1] [Presumably an error for 'November,' see date of the enclosure.]

protest of the Belgian Government against the employment by the Germans in the Congo of undisciplined black troops which have received no military training and are not under the command of white officers. The Minister of State has just sent me, and I have the honour to transmit to you herewith, a copy of the answer of the Minister of Foreign Affairs at Berlin to the verbal note by which the Spanish Ambassador was instructed to notify our refusal to treat as belligerents hordes of negroes led by native chiefs. On the pretext that communications with countries beyond the seas are interrupted, the Foreign Office declares that it is unable to give any information on the subject.

(Signed) BARON GRENIER.

ENCLOSURE TO No. 91

Auswärtiges Amt to the Spanish Embassy.—Reply to the Verbal Note of October 14, 1914, *concerning the alleged employment of natives by Germany against the Belgian Congo.*

The Imperial Department of Foreign Affairs regrets not to be in a position to give any information concerning the alleged employment of natives against the Belgian Congo, as the authorities within whose purview the matter lies have no news in regard to it. Moreover, there is no possibility of obtaining any information on the subject, since the Powers actually at war with Germany have interrupted all communications with countries beyond the seas.

Berlin, November 8, 1914.

SECTION XI

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY SENT BATTERIES OF ARTILLERY TO BELGIUM BEFORE THE DECLARATION OF WAR

No. 104

M. Davignon, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to Baron Fallon, Belgian Minister at The Hague

Havre, October 20, 1914.

SIR,—Be so kind as to send the following declaration to the Government of His Apostolic Majesty through the intermediary of the Spanish Legation:—'When the Belgian Govern-

ment replied to the declaration of war by Austria-Hungary, they were unaware of certain facts that would have modified their answer, or rather that would have made them take the initiative in a rupture of diplomatic relations. For according to a proclamation by the German Lieutenant-General who styles himself Governor of the Fortress of Liège, 'the big motor batteries sent by Austria have proved their excellence in the fighting round Namur.' These fights took place before the declaration of war by Austria-Hungary on Belgium, which was based primarily on the military co-operation of Belgium with France and Great Britain. If the Belgian Government had had knowledge at that date of Austro-Hungarian participation in the attack on Belgium, they would immediately have recalled the Belgian Minister accredited to Vienna. The Austrian declaration of the 28th of August declared that Austria-Hungary had been compelled to break off diplomatic relations and considered herself *from that moment* in a state of war with Belgium.

'It was thus while peace was still undisturbed, and the two countries were still maintaining diplomatic relations, that Austrian artillery attacked and destroyed the forts of Namur.'

(Signed) DAVIGNON.

(See *First Grey Book*, Nos. 77 and 78.[1])

[1] [*Diplomatic*, 2, pp. 67-70]

No. 105

The Belgian Minister at Madrid to M. Davignon, Minister of Foreign Affairs

Madrid, April 5, 1915.

SIR,—The Minister of State has just sent me, and I have the honour to transmit to you, a note addressed on the 6th of February last by the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister to the Spanish Embassy at Vienna, in reply to a communication from M. Polo de Bernabé concerning the Austro-Hungarian batteries which were put at the disposal of the German army at the siege of Namur.

The Marquis of Lema adds that this document, which accompanied a letter from the Ambassador dated the 11th February, reached him after a delay that he is unable to explain. (Signed) BARON GRENIER.

ENCLOSURE TO No. 105

Note

The Belgian Government having pointed out that, when they replied to the declaration of war by Austria-Hungary, certain facts were unknown to them, and that in particular they were unaware that previous to the declaration of war by the Monarchy on Belgium Austro-Hungarian batteries had taken part in fighting around Namur, the Imperial and Royal Government desire to point out that at the moment of declaring war on Belgium they were themselves in an analogous position.

Thus the Imperial and Royal Government had not at that moment been informed authoritatively that, already, long before the beginning of the present war and unknown to Austria-Hungary, which was one of the States which guaranteed the neutrality of Belgium, Belgium had entered into negotiations with other of the guaranteeing Powers with a view to military co-operation of Belgium with Great Britain and France, negotiations which, as is shown by documents recently discovered by the German authorities in the Belgian archives, finally resulted in the conclusion of arrangements of a military nature directed against Germany. It was undoubtedly these tendencies, absolutely contrary to the spirit and tenor of the treaties of April 10, 1839, which led the Belgian Government to decline the proposals which Germany had made to them in order to obtain free passage through Belgian territory for German troops—proposals which were provoked by the hostile attitude of Belgium and dictated by the urgent necessity for the German Empire's self-preservation—and thus to force Germany to make war on Belgium. It is precisely by proceeding in this manner that the Belgian Government gave ground for the use in the operations against the Belgian fortresses of the Austro-Hungarian batteries, which from the beginning of the complications that led to the war had been placed at the disposal of Germany by the Monarchy.

It is apparent from the above that the Belgian Government themselves provoked the act for which they now endeavour to place responsibility on the shoulders of the

Imperial and Royal Government. This Government is accordingly entitled to repudiate this unfounded reproach and to state, in its turn, that Belgium acted in a manner contrary to the duties devolving on her in her capacity of a permanently neutral State.

No. 106

M. Davignon, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to Baron Grenier, Belgian Minister at Madrid

Havre, April 20, 1915.

SIR,—I have the honour to send you herewith the reply of the Belgian Government to the note of the Imperial and Royal Government which you sent to me in your report of April 5. I should be glad if it could be sent to its destination through the good offices of the Spanish Government.

(Signed) DAVIGNON.

ENCLOSURE TO No. 106

Note

By a note bearing the date February 11, the Imperial and Royal Government pleads the discovery in the Belgian archives of documents revealing an alleged Anglo-Belgian military understanding directed against Germany, in order to justify the participation of the Austro-Hungarian artillery in the destruction of the forts of Namur at a time when Belgium and Austria-Hungary were at peace. It declares that it was these tendencies, contrary to the spirit and tenor of the treaties of 1839, which led Belgium to decline the German proposals, which were provoked by the hostile attitude of Belgium and dictated to Germany by the care for her own safety. It adds, finally, that the use of the Austrian guns, which from the beginning of the hostilities had been placed at the disposal of Germany, against the fortresses of Namur, was due to this hostile attitude of the Belgian Government, and that the Imperial and Royal Government is entitled to point out that Belgium has acted in a manner contrary to the duties devolving on her in her capacity of a permanently neutral State.

The Imperial and Royal Government therefore endeavours to justify its having engaged in hostilities against us in time

of peace by asserting that we had failed to carry out the duties of neutrality by negotiating with England a military agreement aimed against Germany. This calumnious accusation, which the Belgian Government deeply resents, had no influence whatever on the declaration of war which Austria-Hungary addressed to Belgium on August the 28th, 1914. Indeed, even if the culpability of the Belgian Government had been proved, it would still be pertinent to ask how that would justify an attack which was made two months before the discovery of the incriminating documents.

But the Belgian Government, which for more than eighty-four years has scrupulously observed its international obligations, emphatically denies the accusation of the German chancellery that it has betrayed them. If the Imperial and Royal Government had read the documents found in the archives of Brussels, it would have convinced itself that these documents did not prove the crime of which the Belgian Government is accused.

These documents are two in number.[1]

The first is a report addressed by General Ducarne, chief of the Belgian General Staff, to the Minister of War on the conversations he had had in the beginning of the year 1906 with Colonel Barnardiston, British Military Attaché. These conversations dealt with the pledge of England to guarantee Belgium's neutrality. At the beginning of their conversation General Ducarne mentions the hypothesis assumed by Colonel Barnardiston. 'The entry of English troops into Belgium would take place only after the violation of Belgian neutrality by Germany!'

This hypothesis, namely, the previous violation of Belgian neutrality, is sufficient in itself to exonerate the Belgian Government from the wrongful act imputed to it by Germany, on the assumption, of course, that the documents are not mutilated, and that they are not made to say what they do not contain, as has been done in the translation published by the *North German Gazette*.

The violation of the neutrality of Belgium on the eastern frontier being a contingency which numerous signs showed to be threatening as far back as 1906, the elementary duty of the Belgian General Staff was to study a scheme of help to be sent by England to Belgium as guaranteeing Power, under

[1] [For their text, see *Diplomatic*, 2, pp. 331-41]

this hypothesis, to repel an attack by Germany. The fact that this contingency has occurred, with a brutality which no one could have conceived, shows that these preoccupations were justified. Moreover, Colonel Barnardiston, who was merely Military Attaché, had not the authority necessary to contract an engagement, any more than General Ducarne, an official of the War Office, was qualified to take official cognisance of a promise of help. It lay with the Government alone to conclude a convention with a view to fulfilling the promised guarantees. Not only has no such convention ever been concluded, but the conversations on which the accusation is based have never been made the subject of deliberation by the Government.

The second document relates to a conversation on the same subject, which took place in April 1912, between Military Attaché Bridges and Lieutenant-General Jungbluth. In the course of this conversation General Jungbluth observed to Colonel Bridges that an English intervention on behalf of Belgium would be possible only with the consent of the latter. The British Military Attaché objected that England would perhaps be led to exercise her rights and her duties as one of the guaranteeing Powers of Belgium, without waiting for the latter to call in her aid. That was a personal opinion of Colonel Bridges; it was never shared by his Government, and this conversation clearly shows that the intervention of England could not have taken place before the violation of Belgian neutrality by Germany. This second document would in itself destroy any suspicion that a convention had been concluded in 1906, as a result of a conversation between Ducarne and Barnardiston. As a matter of fact Colonel Bridges did not in 1912 even make any allusion to the conversation of Colonel Barnardiston in 1906, and it is evident that if a convention had been concluded six years before, the speakers, in broaching this subject, could not have failed to refer to it.

The Imperial and Royal Government is clearly wrong in ascribing the German aggression to the hostile attitude of Belgium. Until August 2, 1914, the date of the ultimatum, no difference had arisen between the two countries, their relations had not ceased to be cordial, and Germany had alleged no grievance against us. It is clear, from the evidence

of the official documents already published and from the speech delivered by the Imperial Chancellor on August the 4th,[1] that Germany had nothing with which to reproach Belgium, and if their troops have attacked her, it is for the purpose of reaching France by the quickest and easiest road, so as to strike a decisive blow as soon as possible. 'We were forced,' the Chancellor said in his speech on August the 4th, 'to ignore the rightful protests of the Governments of Luxemburg and Belgium. The wrong—I speak openly—the wrong we thereby commit we will make good as soon as our military aims have been attained.'

[1] [See *Diplomatic*, 2, pp. 353-7]

To declare war on Belgium, the Imperial and Royal Government have invoked every kind of pretext except failure to fulfil the duties of neutrality, and they cannot deny that while we were entertaining friendly relations with them, and were trying to comply with the demands of their representative at Brussels, they gave the order to their troops to destroy our forts at Namur.

SECTION XII

LEGEND OF THE PUTTING OUT OF EYES

No. 107

M. Davignon, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to all Diplomatic Representatives Abroad

Havre, November 25, 1914.

SIR,—I request you to be good enough to have the enclosed *communiqué* published in a paper of the country to which you are accredited.

I should like it to be published as soon as possible.

(Signed) DAVIGNON.

ENCLOSURE TO No. 107

Note

We have heard from Berlin through an excellent source that two official commissions have been appointed, one of them civil and the other military, acting independently, to inquire into all acts of cruelty attributed to belligerents. The Civil Commission has reported that—

'In regard to the matter of the putting out of eyes, whenever a case of this kind has been referred to in the newspapers, or has been reported from private sources, the Commission has sought out witnesses and taken their evidence: in many cases, not to say in nearly all, the witnesses admitted that they knew the facts only by hearsay; others either refused to come forward or did not put in an appearance.

'The Commission arrived at the conclusion that no formal proofs of wounded men or prisoners having had their eyes put out by Belgian women were produced, and that in no case is there any official record of this having taken place.

'Doctors and the Members of the Commission of Inquiry stated that, when people's minds are over-excited as they now are, it was quite natural that acts of brutality and cruelty should be committed by either side, but that generally speaking these acts had been greatly exaggerated.

'The stories about the putting out of eyes must have arisen from the fact that a large number of wounded men have had their eyes put out by fragments of shrapnel which, bursting at the height of a man, very often cause wounds in the eyes.

'French and English illustrated papers confirm this. You there constantly see, in places where shells are bursting, men being wounded in the face, and instinctively protecting their faces with their arms or their hands.

'It seems that thousands of rooks and crows swoop down into all the battlefields, and they always attack the eyes of the dead and wounded. This may have helped to give rise to the story, which medical investigations have in every case proved to be untrue.

'In a Frankfort hospital twenty-nine severely wounded men lay, it seems, side by side, all with their eyes put out. In not a single case could their wounds be attributed to any other cause than that of fragments of shrapnel. In spite of this the legend still survives; but we have been assured that in official circles the acts of cruelty with which the Belgians have been reproached are formally denied.'

The Civil Commission is quite definite on this subject.

The Military Commission is still pursuing its inquiry, but it has reached the same conclusions. It has not yet

announced officially its findings, and for that reason the conclusions it has reached are subject to reserve, and should only be considered as provisional and of a purely private character.

We are glad to note that the acts of abominable cruelty of which Belgian women were so unjustly accused by the most authoritative organs of the Imperial Government have been formally denied by the two Commissions appointed by that same Government.

No. 108

M. Davignon, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to all Diplomatic Representatives Abroad

Havre, December 18, 1914.

SIR,—In continuation of my letter of November 25th last, I have the honour to call your attention to an article which appeared in the *Temps* of the 15th of this month under the heading 'La légende des yeux crevés.' It quotes, from the *Kölnische Volkszeitung* and the *Vorwärts*, two notes contradicting the calumnious accusations of the German semi-official press on the subject of the alleged mutilation of the wounded by the Belgian civil population. (Signed) DAVIGNON.

ENCLOSURE TO No. 108

Berne, December 12.

The important Catholic paper, the *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, published the following letter in one of its recent issues :

TO THE EDITOR

Aix-la-Chapelle, November 26.

SIR,—One of the most ungrateful tasks at the present time is to defend the truth against the absurd rumours which are circulating in the country. The *Kölnische Volkszeitung* has already on September 30, 1914, published a letter from me in which I stated that after inquiry I had not found in the thirty-five hospitals in Aix-la-Chapelle a single German wounded soldier who had had his eyes put out. Since then you have informed me that my letter had by no means put an end to these reports, and you sent me an article from the *Kölnische Zeitung* of the 3rd October calculated to

revive belief in these fantastic stories. It is stated in that article in the *Kölnische Zeitung* that a doctor, named Saethre, has visited the hospitals of Cologne, and the following passage occurs in the translation of his report: 'There cannot be any doubt as to the cruelties committed by francs-tireurs. I have myself seen at Aix-la-Chapelle a Red Cross sister who had one of her breasts cut off by them, and a squadron commander who had his eyes put out while he was lying on the field of battle.'

You have asked me to write to you what I think of this report. I have accordingly approached the official authorities with a view to ascertaining if the facts mentioned by Dr. Saethre were correct. I have received the following letter, dated November 25, from the Director of the hospital: 'The atrocities you mention have not been committed, at least in so far as Aix-la-Chapelle is concerned. We have never seen the Red Cross sister referred to, nor the squadron commander either.'

I do not know where the doctor mentioned in the *Kölnische Zeitung* obtained his information. I think it necessary to state once more that there is not in the hospitals in Aix-la-Chapelle any wounded man who has had his eyes put out, or any Red Cross sister who has been mutilated in the manner named above. FR. KAUFMANN, *Archpriest.*

Moreover the *Vorwärts* publishes on December 6 the results of an inquiry addressed to the management of the hospitals of Hanover and of the big hospital de la Charité in Berlin. The authorities in charge of the Hanover hospitals sent the following reply to the Socialist paper:—

'After making inquiries among the doctors of the different sections of No. 3 Hospital, we are able to inform you that we have not at this moment any wounded men whose eyes have been put out. We have never had any.'

Similarly the authorities in charge of the hospital de la Charité in Berlin sent the following note to the *Vorwärts*:

'The hospital de la Charité has never had any wounded men who have had their eyes put out.'

SECTION XV

The Town of Courtrai Fined 10,000,000 Marks for having obeyed Two German Commandants

No. 115

M. Davignon, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to Baron Grenier, Belgian Minister at Madrid

(Telegraphic.) *Havre, January* 10, 1915.

The town of Courtrai has just been punished by a fine of ten million marks for an alleged hidden depot of arms. The municipal authorities are in no way to blame, for they only called in the arms and had them deposited in the Broel tower, in accordance with two proclamations, issued in succession, the first by order of Commandant Maxeman, and the second by order of Commandant Pschors.

Be good enough to request the Spanish Government to bring to the knowledge of the German Governmen the facts which prove the unjustifiable character of this punishment.

(Signed) Davignon.

SECTION XIX

The German Officers and Men taken Prisoners by the Belgian Army have been treated according to the Regulations of The Hague Convention

No. 122

M. Davignon, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to Baron Grenier, Belgian Minister at Madrid

Havre, February 18, 1915.

Sir,—In the course of the months of November and December, my colleague, the Minister of War, and various other Belgian persons received numerous letters from officers, prisoners in Germany, making it known that the military authorities of that country believed, on the strength of reports sent in by, amongst others, a German doctor named Weinstein,

that the prisoners who had fallen into the hands of the Belgians and French were being ill-treated. The writers of the letters in question had been informed that reprisals would be taken against them if the treatment of the Germans were not promptly improved.

Identical complaints having reached the French Government, the latter on 15th December addressed a note to the Spanish Ambassador at Berlin, a note which he was requested to transmit to the Imperial Government, concerning the prisoners of war in France and in Germany ; in this particulars are given of the treatment to which the German prisoners in France are subjected. The German combatants captured by the Belgian Army are subjected to the same treatment, because as they come in they are sent on to the French military authorities, and kept in France under the same conditions as the Germans taken by the French troops.

Certain allegations, however, of the German doctor Weinstein had special reference to the period during which the German officers by whom the complaints were made had been kept prisoner in Belgium, and particularly at Bruges.

The enclosed copy of a report by Lieutenant-General Thieman, ex-Inspector-General of the internment depots of prisoners of war in Belgium, shows the inaccuracy of the allegations in question.

The French note on the prisoners of war in France and in Germany, to which reference has been made above, enumerates, on the other hand, many grave matters of complaint as to the way in which French prisoners are treated in Germany. The Belgian Government have on their side received written evidence proving that the treatment given to Belgian prisoners in certain German camps is not such as Chapter II. of the regulations forming part of the Hague Convention concerning the Laws and Customs of War on land ought to secure to those within the jurisdiction of the Powers who signed the Convention. They reserve to themselves the right to return to the subject later on.

You will be good enough to ask the Spanish Government to transmit to Berlin, in the form of a note, the text of the present letter. You will find enclosed a copy *ad hoc* which you can hand to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

(Signed) DAVIGNON.

ENCLOSURE TO No. 122

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERNMENT DEPOTS OF PRISONERS OF WAR

Declaration

In my capacity as Inspector-General of the Internment Depots for Prisoners of War, I visited on the 11th and 18th of August the depot established and occupied at Bruges.

On my first visit, I ascertained that Major-General Stienon, commanding the Province of West Flanders, assisted by Lieutenant-Colonel Capoen and Major Lambert, had decided upon and put in force an organisation in which I had only to make some modifications of trifling importance. The measures prescribed were embodied in an order which ensured a most generous interpretation of the Belgian regulations, the humanitarian rules of which allow the suffering of prisoners of war to be reduced to a minimum, alike from the moral and from the physical point of view. A copy of this order should form part of a dossier to be found at the War Office. On August 18 I had only congratulations to offer; all the rules were observed.

Officer Prisoners

On August the 11th I visited each prisoner in the room which had been allotted him, and I had a private conversation with the occupant, in the course of which I bade him make any request he wished, and I assured him that I would do my best to grant it so far as I was able.

The requests addressed to me may be summed up as follows:—

(1) To be prisoner on parole;
(2) To be united in groups;
(3) To improve the diet:
(4) To increase the lighting and ventilation of the rooms;
(5) To increase the time devoted to walks.

Except as concerns the requests under (1) and (2), satisfaction was given immediately to those concerned. Instructions received from the War Office prevented me from granting the wishes expressed in Nos. 1 and 2.

The cost of the daily board was increased from two to three

francs, *and that with the consent of those concerned,* who had been consulted by myself.

At the time of my visit on August the 18th I again saw the officer prisoners. To those whom I had seen on the 11th others had been added, amongst whom were some medical officers. I talked to every one of them : I asked each one his opinion about the diet, and they all declared themselves satisfied. No more wishes were expressed to me. One of them thanked me in the name of all for what I had done on their behalf.

Prisoners of the Rank and File

The rules to which prisoners of the rank and file had to submit were nearly the same as those to which our soldiers have to submit in peace time.

As early as the 11th of August, the rank and file (like the officers) were supplied with postcards ; between August the 11th and 19th a canteen was established, which is no doubt still in working order.

During my visit on August the 19th, I was told, *by those concerned,* that they had no complaint to make. Everything was in fact carried out in accordance with the instructions in force.

The Minister of State, M. Vandervelde, was able to ascertain by personal inspection, during his visit on August the 11th to the depot at Brussels, that all the efforts of the military authorities were directed to a mitigation in the fullest possible measure of the unhappy condition of prisoners of war. The Consul of the United States of America, who visited the depot during the first ten days of October last in company with Captain Vermeire of the General Staff, who had been sent by Major-General Bihin, and whom I saw in the offices of the 'Place' at Bruges, assured me that he carried away with him an excellent impression, of which he would inform his Government.

From the above, it follows that the German assertions are categorically refuted, so far as concerns the rules to which the prisoners of war (officers and men) have been subjected at the internment depot of Bruges.

THIEMAN,
Lieutenant-General, retired.

January 21, 1915.

WAR WITH TURKEY

CORRESPONDENCE RESPECTING EVENTS LEADING TO RUPTURE OF RELATIONS WITH TURKEY [1]

No. 44

Mr. Cheetham to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received August* 28) [Cd. 7628

(Telegraphic.) *Cairo, August* 28, 1914.

Ottoman forces are being mobilised in Hedjaz and farther south, and existing military activity in Red Sea may thus be explained. About sixty Turkish officers arrived at Alexandria recently and passed through Egypt down Red Sea. Their destination was the Yemen.

Twelve thousand Turkish troops are reported in Jeddah region.

Signs are not lacking that, in case of war, an attack on Egypt is contemplated by Turkey. A few Turkish officers are now in the Delta. Steps have been taken to watch all those that are known. I learn from a good source that all information of Turkish mobilisation reported from Constantinople is correct. Meanwhile emissaries are being sent to India, the Yemen, Senoussi, and Egypt, to stir up feeling against Great Britain. Activity at Gaza is reported, but it is uncertain whether this is more than raising of levies to replace regulars withdrawn from the north by mobilisation.

No. 52

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, September* 1, 1914.

In order that there may be no room for misconception, you should inform Turkish Government that Egyptian

[1] [Extracts. The complete papers will be found in *Naval*, 2, pp. 34-158.]

Government are taking measures to patrol Suez Canal on both banks, and that this step is necessary to protect the safe and proper working of the Canal. You should add that no advance into Sinai, nor military operations in that region, are under contemplation.

No. 72

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received September* 11)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, September* 10, 1914.

Consignments of warlike material from Germany traced up to date amount to 3000 rounds of projectiles for *Goeben*, battery of field-guns with ammunition, several batteries of heavy howitzers, probably for field army use, and some thousands of rifles. More consignments are on the way. All German reservists who have not been able to leave Turkish Empire have been instructed to report for enrolment with Turkish troops.

No. 74

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received September* 14)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, September* 13, 1914.

I hear that Germans are now dominant at Alexandretta, and secretly suggest and control everything. From September 7 to morning of September 12, 24 mountain guns, 400 horses and mules, 500 artillery troops belonging to service of 6th Army Corps, and large quantity of ammunition passed through Alexandretta, proceeding by railway to Constantinople.

No. 85

Mr. Cheetham to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received September* 22)

(Telegraphic.) *Cairo, September* 21, 1914.

Information respecting Turkish preparations against Egypt receives fresh corroboration. There has been no slackening of military preparation in Palestine and in Syria.

If Turkish preparations continue, it may become necessary to put patrols into Sinai and to support our posts in the peninsula. Action of forces in Egypt has been hitherto confined, as you are aware, to patrol of Suez Canal, but I think that Turkish Government should be warned that measures for the protection of the Egyptian frontier may become necessary.

No. 89

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, September* 24, 1914.

I hear that Egyptian frontier has been violated by armed mounted Arabs said to be encouraged by Turkish troops, and also that Hedjaz line is being reserved for troops. British military authorities consider that breach of the peace on Egyptian frontier is imminent, whether with or without sanction of Turkish Government. You should bring these facts to the knowledge of the Grand Vizier and of the Khedive, who is at present at Constantinople.

No. 90

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 25)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, September* 24, 1914.

Turkish preparations against Egypt.

I have addressed a note to the Grand Vizier recapitulating information recently received on this subject. I reminded His Highness of the assurances which I had several times given him, based upon your telegram of 7th August,[1] and I specially pointed out their conditional nature. Finally I warned him that the information respecting Turkish preparations against Egypt would infallibly produce a most serious impression upon His Majesty's Government.

I later communicated the contents of my note to President of the Council, Minister of Finance, and Minister of Interior, and asked them what explanations they could give, where-

[1] [See No. 5, *Naval*, 2, p. 35.]

upon they inquired why so many thousand Indian troops were being sent to Egypt by His Majesty's Government. To this I answered that it was essential to ensure the safety of Egypt and the protection of the Suez Canal, and that as the British garrison of Egypt had been sent to France, it was necessary to replace it by British Indian troops. This seemed to satisfy them.

I cannot believe that they are not alive to the disastrous consequences of going to war with us, or that they seriously can contemplate an expedition against Egypt. They have undoubtedly been strongly urged to send such an expedition by the Germans, and I think that they have allowed preparations to be made, partly to profit as much as possible by German connection and by allowing the Germans to think that they will act, and partly in order to be ready, if Great Britain sustains a serious defeat by land or sea.

Danger of the present situation is obvious, and developments are not improbable, and I shall see the Grand Vizier this morning and endeavour to bring him to book. There is a circumstantial report that the Germans are now making desperate efforts to force the Turks' hands and to compel them to fulfil their part of the bargain, but that at the same time their efforts are meeting with considerable resistance.

No. 91

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 25)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, September 24, 1914.*

I have informed the Grand Vizier that Austro-German intrigues to involve Turkey in an expedition against Egypt are within my knowledge. Grand Vizier denied that such intrigues existed, but he finally admitted that pressure was being exerted. He declared that he was firmly resolved to keep out of any such intrigue, any complicity in which he disclaimed with emphasis. I strongly urged His Highness to make his position clearer, for preparations at the Dardanelles showed that he was either guilty of complicity or that he was not master in his own house. He answered that his intentions were entirely pacific, and that he did not mean to engage in any quarrel with Great Britain.

His Highness seemed more preoccupied with the Balkan situation at the moment than with anything else. He said that Turkish Government would be unable to refrain from an attempt to get back what they had lost in Balkan wars if Balkan complications ensued. No arguments of mine would induce him to change his attitude in this respect. He said he would be powerless to prevent it.

No. 92

Mr. Cheetham to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received September* 25)

(Telegraphic.) *Cairo, September* 25, 1914.

Turkish preparations on Sinai frontier.

Two thousand men with stores passed Gaza on night of September 18, following coast towards frontier. Six more battalions are expected at Gaza. In that neighbourhood very strong and secret military preparations are being made on the frontier. Three battalions of Redif completely mobilised have marched to a place one day south of Jaffa on their way to the frontier.

No. 95

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received September* 26)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, September* 25, 1914.

On September 22 and 23, 183 horses, 112 nizam, 2 officers, and 88 carts and carriages, all from Aintab, were entrained at Aleppo for Damascus.

Secret notice was given that in six days' time 120 railway wagons were to be in readiness to convey to Damascus troops arriving from Mosul via Tel Abiyat, and that in all from 25,000 to 30,000 troops were to be drafted from Mosul to Aleppo, of which at least half are destined for Hama or Damascus.

Two Germans connected with Bagdad Railway, one of whom is an expert in blasting operations and mine-laying, left Aleppo this morning for Damascus, the other telling his servant that they were going to Akaba. They had with

them 1600 dynamite cartridges and 1500 metres of detonating wires. They may, perhaps, be commissioned to lay mines in Red Sea as there has been talk of Turkish military designs regarding Akaba recently.

No. 96

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received September 27*)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, September 26, 1914.*

Grand Vizier has been informed of the information reported by Mr. Cheetham in his telegram of 25th September,[1] and in my telegram of the same date.[2] I warned His Highness that if these preparations against Egypt were allowed to continue, serious consequences would ensue. Minister of War was with Grand Vizier when I made these representations, and His Highness informed me that he fully realised the importance of the question, with which he was occupying himself. I have taken steps to enlighten influential people with what is being done as regards Egypt, and I have seen Minister of Interior and left a memorandum with him on the subject; I have also put the facts before other prominent members of the Cabinet.

No. 100

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, September 29, 1914.*

Information has reached His Majesty's Government that Turkish Minister of War telegraphed to Bin Saud, Emir of Nejd, several times towards the end of July that, owing to the imminence of war in Europe, arms, ammunition, and officers for training his Arabs were being sent to him.

Vali of Basra has been informed by Turkish Minister of War that thirty-two secret emissaries, including German officers, are on their way to preach a 'jehad' in India, Afghanistan, and Baluchistan; that arms and ammunition are being sent to Basra under German flag, and that Turkish

[1] See No. 92. [2] See No. 95.

Government are prepared to help Germany in return for assistance received during Balkan war.

No. 104

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October* 3)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October* 2, 1914.

Information continues to reach me corroborating reports of Turkish preparations against Egypt. Large transport camel corps arrived at Jerusalem yesterday, and I hear of transport of warlike materials, food-stuffs, and military stores on line Jenin-Nablus-Jerusalem, and also to Maan. Seven German military officers have been sent to Damascus and neighbourhood. This has stimulated preparations, and it is believed in Syria that Turkish Government has decided upon a movement against Egypt, Damascus division being assembled for advance by Akaba, Jerusalem division for that by Rafa. Inhabitants at Beirout and Haifa are being removed inland as a precautionary measure against any action which may be taken by British fleet when the advance on Egypt begins. It is reported from Haifa that localities along the coast are being garrisoned by newly arrived troops. I have brought the gravity of the existing situation to the notice of the Grand Vizier in the strongest terms in a further note, though I do not view any actual movement against Egypt as imminent at the moment. In my note I have informed His Highness that the measures now undertaken can have no reason except as a threat against Egypt, and that they can no longer be regarded as incidental to an ordinary mobilisation of troops in their peace stations, and I have stated that His Majesty's Government can only view any further preparations at Jerusalem or at Maan in a serious light.

In addition to above-mentioned military measures, movements of suspicious individuals have now been supplemented by those of a German naval officer named Hilgendorff, who is at present on his way from Damascus to Petra with a party of eight Germans. It is understood that they will be joined by a smaller party from Haifa *via* Amman, and that they are conveying a large supply of explosives. I have

made representations to the Grand Vizier explaining that such hostile enterprises against Great Britain cannot be allowed in a neutral country, and that these people must be arrested.

Speaking generally, I am inclined to think that both in the neighbourhood of Constantinople, on the Black Sea, the Egyptian frontier, and elsewhere, the Turks intend to have their troops all ready for action at a favourable point should the general European situation afford a good opportunity. Should the German admiral take the *Goeben* into the Black Sea and attack the Russian fleet, or should things take an unfavourable turn for the Allies, Turkish troops would be in a position to cross the Egyptian frontier without much further delay. His Majesty's Government will doubtless consider what, if any, military measures are necessary for the strengthening of strategical points in the Sinai peninsula.

No. 109

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October* 6)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October* 6, 1914.

Military attaché had a long interview with Minister of War yesterday, from which he derived the impression that His Excellency had ambitious schemes in the Arab world and in Egypt. These may perhaps refer more to the future, and possibly measures are now being taken so as to prepare for the eventuality of Great Britain being worsted in war with Germany ; meanwhile the way is being paved indirectly for present or future action. During the conversation, Minister of War disclaimed any intention on the part of the Turks of initiating, themselves, any offensive movements against Egypt, and pointed out that ordinary Syrian garrison had not been reinforced. He said that, as in the case of other troops within the Empire, Syrian garrison had been fully mobilised. It was being equipped with necessary transport animals, etc., on a war scale, and it was being carefully trained with the help of the officers of the German mission as elsewhere throughout Turkey. Everything, he said, depended on the political situation, for which he was not responsible

individually; and it was quite possible that the Syrian army corps might finally be moved in another direction, even, perhaps, to Constantinople. He scouted the idea of individual Germans undertaking enterprises against the Suez Canal or elsewhere, but he admitted that proposals had certainly been made to the Bedouin tribes to enlist their sympathies as supporters of the Empire in all eventualities. He defended the concentration of stores at Maan, Nablus, and Jerusalem, and he added that no troops, but only gendarmes, had been moved in the direction of Gaza. Nevertheless, he could not deny that some of the measures taken were certainly precautionary against Great Britain, and in justification of this he pointed to the entrance of British men-of-war into the Shatt-el-Arab, to the arrival of Indian troops in Egypt, and to the presence of the British fleet in Turkish territorial waters outside the Dardanelles. Military attaché said that, as far as the action of the fleet and of His Majesty's Government were concerned, this was due to infringement of neutrality by Turks, and Great Britain certainly had not the slightest intention of making any attack upon Turkey. It was quite ridiculous to suppose that the arrival of Indian troops in Egypt had anything to do with hostility to Turkey. Minister of War at once advanced such arguments as that Turkey had maintained her neutrality; that German officers and men on auxiliary ships were entirely under Turkish control, indeed they were in the Turkish service. Military attaché said that Turks could not be surprised that Great Britain should be preoccupied if Turkish troops were assembled farther south than Jerusalem or Beersheba on the one side, or Maan on the other.

No. 114

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October* 8)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October* 7, 1914.

There has been fighting during the last few days on frontier between Russian troops and Kurds supported by Turkish troops. Last night Russian Ambassador made strong representations to the Grand Vizier, and said that

the Turkish Government must restrain the activities of their troops on the frontier. Furthermore, Russian consul had been arrested. Replying to these representations, Grand Vizier assured Russian Ambassador, in writing, that the consul should be released at once and that the fighting should cease. Russian Ambassador has certain information that Turks are being incited to fight by Germans and Austrians. His Excellency agrees with me that Grand Vizier is honestly exercising what influence he has in favour of peace, but it is doubtful if he has the power to restrain the military party under Enver Pasha.

No. 115

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October* 11)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October* 10, 1914.

It is highly probable that for some time past money has been sent to Syria mainly with the object of subsidising the Bedouins. It is also supposed that the Germans in Syria have had sums of money with them. The following is the number of German military officers known to be in Syria at present: Seven who went there some time ago, of whom Colonel Kress von Kressenstein is one, four who arrived October 2 at Damascus, and five more who arrived there on October 6. My information is to the effect that seven more may since have arrived at Alexandretta. Meanwhile, another party of Turkish sailors is leaving Constantinople overland for Bagdad and the Tigris. Information has just reached me from Damascus to the effect that Colonel von Kressenstein had gone to Maan to inspect, but only two military trains with details and stores had left in the last two days. West of the Jordan no movements had taken place. Two railway vans of dynamite had left Damascus for Beirout; four thousand Mosul troops had reached Aleppo, but were waiting there for the present.

No. 118

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October* 12)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October* 12, 1914.

My despatch of October 4.[1]

I have received note from the Porte in reply to my note of 2nd October respecting Turkish preparations against Egypt.

It says that military activity in Syria is common to all provinces of the Empire, and is natural consequence of mobilisation, having no other object than to put Turkey on a footing to defend her neutrality. Turkey's position being one of simple and legitimate precautions, it will be readily recognised that it would not be conceivable that she should change it in order to attack Egypt, which is one of her own provinces.

The Porte goes on to observe that, although I have on several occasions assured Grand Vizier that His Majesty's Government have no intention of altering status of Egypt, yet declaration that Egypt is in a state of war, dismissal of German and Austrian agents, who receive their exequaturs from the Porte, and above all arrival in Egypt of important contingents from India as well as other acts, have attracted serious attention of Imperial Government and have created real anxiety.

Note concludes by reiterating to me assurance that Turkey has no hostile intention towards any Power whatever, and that military preparations have purely and exclusively defensive character.

I think that it would be right to remind Grand Vizier that I have always made it perfectly clear that undertaking not to change the status of Egypt was conditional on Turkey maintaining strict neutrality.

No. 124

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October* 14)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October* 14, 1914.

Moslems in Aleppo district are reported to have been so inveigled and incited by German and Turkish deliberate

[1] Received on October 19. See No. 143.

official misrepresentations and falsehoods of every kind that masses seem to believe German Emperor has embraced Islamic faith, and that Germans are fighting for Islam against Russia.

No. 127

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October* 15)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October* 14, 1914.

About 600 Moslem 'fedahis,' dressed in various guises, have arrived at Aleppo in batches during past fortnight, their head being an officer related to Ottoman Minister of War; 400 of these came from Smyrna, where they had incited Moslems against Greeks. At Aleppo they intrigued, with the aid of Committee of Union and Progress, with sheikhs against Great Britain. Discourses of a guarded anti-British tendency were pronounced in mosques. The last batch left Aleppo October 12 by rail. Parties of them have proceeded to Hama, Homs, Baalbek, Damascus, the Hauran, to incite sheikhs against Great Britain, and they are to continue their journey south by Hedjaz Railway, and to find their way into Egypt to incite Moslems there. Many of the principal sheikhs of Aleppo seem now gained over to side of Germany.

No. 129

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October* 16)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October* 15, 1914.

Son of Kurdish chief Issa, who is stated to have influence in Mesopotamia, and who has been in Constantinople for instructions, is said to have left for Basra to work anti-English propaganda, and other agents, including Germans, are said to be on their way to Afghanistan on similar errand.

I learn that Zekki Pasha, commander of 8th Corps, has lately received £5000 to distribute amongst Bedouins, and that as much as £35,000 in gold left here by train on 12th for Syria. Senator Abdurrahman is working among Bedouins at Maan and Muntaz Bey on the west by Beersheba and Jerusalem.

Party of Turkish sailors mentioned as having left here by

train for Basra are now stated to be on the way to Akaba with consignment of metal boats. Another lot of boats is at Rayak, possibly on the way to Beirout. Quantities of dynamite have been sent to the coast towns of Syria, probably to serve for mining purposes of land defence. This is in addition to sea mines which have been also forwarded. Numbers of 'working battalions' (soldiers as yet untrained) are road constructing in southern Syria.

All above and previous reports in a similar sense show that there is very considerable activity being directed in a sense hostile to us, and this activity is being worked by German influence and agents in every conceivable direction. Probably Government, as a whole, have little control over these activities, but do not disapprove of them. As regards actual military preparations, German element has sufficient power to persuade the authorities on certain points. German press is directing movement, and has obtained despatch of numbers of German officers to Syria to superintend preparations and training of corps there for war, concentration of stores and supplies at suitable spots, preparation of lines of communication and defence of coast.

No. 130

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October* 16)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October* 16, 1914.

German plots have been so extensive that it is conceivable that they may introduce individuals into Egypt who, impersonating Indian soldiers, may cause mischief.

In substantiation of this I have to state that His Majesty's Consul at Aleppo has learnt that a tailor in that town has been commissioned to make a variety of Indian costumes and head-dresses on design and measurements supplied by German officers there.

No. 131

Sir H. Bax-Ironside to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October* 16)

(Telegraphic.) *Sophia, October* 16, 1914.

Ninety-seven cases of bullion passed through Rustchuk yesterday for Constantinople, accompanied by six Germans.

This consignment was preceded by two hundred other cases. In the last three weeks many heavy cases and stores have passed through same town.

Armaments are believed to be sent through in the night.

No. 132

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October* 16)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October* 16, 1914.

Local authorities at Jaffa have distributed 10,000 rifles amongst Bedouins, each with 100 cartridges, 5000 ten-shot to owners of horses and riding camels, and 5000 single-shot to owners of baggage camels. Bedouins have been employed to dig wells, and Germans to fit them with motor pumps; ovens have been built near frontier.

It is believed that Bedouins' next move is to be towards Akaba.

Horses and mules throughout the whole district are being requisitioned most energetically.

No. 133

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October* 17)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October* 16, 1914.

Major Omar Fevzi Bey, son of Arimm Effendi, ex-Governor-General of Damascus, accompanied by five German officers, arrived at Aleppo October 14 from Constantinople bringing 25,000 liras. The officers passed for engineers, and are buying saddle horses to proceed to Bagdad *via* Ana. From Ana they are to take two batteries of guns, which, together with money and loads of rifles and ammunition taken from Aleppo, they are to deliver to Ibn-el-Reshid.

Railway trucks full of dynamite for Alexandretta and Damascus are expected to arrive from Constantinople. German officers of *Breslau* have already laid thirteen mines at Alexandretta according to report that has now reached me.

No. 136

Sir F. Elliot to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October* 17)

(Telegraphic.) *Athens, October* 17, 1914.

One Bouhadi Sadil has been discovered buying arms for importation into Egypt. He had already bought 700 Gras rifles and ammunition. I understand that two of this man's accomplices were recently convicted in Egypt.

No. 138

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October* 18)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October* 17, 1914.

Since end of September following have reached Constantinople :

Six thousand nine hundred cases of Mauser ammunition, 540 cases of Mauser rifles, 13 trucks of war material, and about 800,000*l.* in bar gold.

Arrival of a submarine in sections is expected shortly, and I am informed that such a consignment, together with two aeroplanes, left Rustchuk on October 8.

Two German ships were recently escorted from Sulina by *Breslau,* and are reported to have brought submarine. But there is no evidence at present to prove this.

No. 139

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October* 18)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October* 18, 1914.

Aeroplane, three airmen, and several mechanics left Beersheba yesterday.

Governor left Jaffa with a view to allaying panic.

Following is résumé of a telegram from Minister of War to commandant at Jaffa which has come to my knowledge :

' On the approach of enemy warships destroy boats and lighters, kill horses, break carriages, and destroy railway. Strictly guard telegraph. When surrender of town is demanded ask for time to consult Jerusalem. If Jerusalem

instructs you not to surrender, oppose landing of the enemy by force of arms. See no looting of town takes place, and find suitable place to shelter your archives. Explain above to the population and arm them, taking oath from them. At signal not to surrender send away women and children. Hoist flag on konak and barracks so as not to have other places bombarded. Break enemy's flagstaff and remove insignia from the door of his consulate.'

No. 143

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October* 19)

Constantinople, October 4, 1914.

SIR,—I have the honour to forward herewith copy of a note which I addressed to the Grand Vizier protesting against certain military preparations in Syria.

On October 2 I addressed a further note, copy of which is also enclosed, pointing out that no answer had been received either to my previous note or to two letters of the 25th and 26th on the same subject.—I have, etc.

LOUIS MALLET.

ENCLOSURE 1 IN No. 143

Sir L. Mallet to Grand Vizier

(TRANSLATION)

Constantinople, September 23, 1914.

YOUR HIGHNESS,—In the course of our interview of yesterday morning, I had the honour to inform your Highness of the anxiety that the news which reached me from Syria in regard to the military preparations and plots against Egypt now going on in that province, was causing me. So long as it was a question of preparations similar to those made in other parts of the Empire, as a consequence of the general mobilisation, I did not mention the matter to your Highness, although special importance might attach to all such doings in the neighbourhood of the Egyptian frontier. Similarly, I have been able up to the present to reject, as improbable tales, the rumours which have reached me from more than

one source, according to which a sudden blow directed against the Suez Canal was being planned with the object of rendering it impassable, although I am aware that the enemies of Great Britain are intriguing with the object of leading your Highness's Government into adventures as insensate, and even more insensate, than this. I should, however, fail in my duty towards my Government, and I may add also towards the Government of your Highness, if I did not bring to your Highness's knowledge the latest reports which have reached me. It appears from these reports that the minds of the Bedouins are being excited by professional agitators, who, encouraged by the Ottoman Government, are desirous of inflaming them against England. The military preparations which up to a certain moment bore a similar character to those in the other provinces of the Empire, have lately changed into a converging movement towards the south. Troops are being brought from such distant centres as Mosul. General activity reigns everywhere from Damascus to Maan, and cumulative evidence leads my Consul at Jerusalem to the belief that an organised expedition against Egypt is in project for the next few days.

I trust that the reports, the contents of which I have just summed up to your Highness, put a wrong interpretation on facts which, as such, cannot be discussed. But I repeat that I should fail in my duty if I did not bring to your Highness's knowledge the grave preoccupation which they cause me, and the impression which they make upon His Britannic Majesty's Government, and if I did not place you on your guard against the disastrous consequences, which would ensue for your Highness's Government, if they were to follow a course so contrary to their own interests as that of becoming the accomplice of Germany in an attack upon Egypt.

Your Highness will remember that at the beginning of the present war, Sir E. Grey instructed Mr. Beaumont to give you the assurance that, provided that Turkey maintained strict and absolute neutrality during the war, and so long as unforeseen circumstances did not arise, His Britannic Majesty's Government had no desire to, nor intention of annexing Egypt, nor of modifying her régime in any way whatsoever. I had the honour to confirm this assurance to your High-

ness shortly after my return to Constantinople. Since then, being desirous of avoiding any possibility of misunderstanding with the Imperial Government, I have repeatedly called your Highness's attention to the conditional character of the assurances given by Sir E. Grey. Now, I hold it to be my duty to declare once more to your Highness that my Government take the most serious view of the unprecedented violations of neutrality already committed by the Turkish Government in retaining German officers and men on board the German warships, and by subsequently taking into their service numerous other Germans in a similar military capacity.

It does not seem to me necessary at this moment to recapitulate the details of still further departures from neutrality committed by Turkey in favour of the enemies of Great Britain. Nor need I insist on the consequences which might ensue if, to add the last touch to so grave a situation, my Government were to become convinced that the Imperial Government were seriously meditating an attack against Egypt, or that they were a party to disloyal intrigues against the security of the Suez Canal, or against the present régime in Egypt. Your Highness can judge of the whole importance and possible extent of these consequences.

I enclose in this note a Memorandum, enumerating in detail the facts which can be considered as indications of a forthcoming attack upon Egypt.—I avail, etc.

LOUIS MALLET.

MEMORANDUM

(TRANSLATION)

From a report dated the 18th instant, it appears that the authorities were using all their efforts in order to excite the Bedouin tribes against England by representing her as the enemy of Islam, and that 30,000 men belonging to these tribes were ready to rise. A supplementary report states that the instigators of this movement are Muntaz Bey, an officer of the army, Essad Shoucair, deputy or former deputy, and a certain Beheddine Bey, aided by several other persons, and with the support of the local, civil, and military authorities. The report adds categorically that, according to

current rumour, these tribes were to arm immediately in order to march on Egypt.

From a further report dated the 18th instant, it appears that a military movement from Damascus towards the south was expected about 20th September ; that the Mosul troops were on their way to Damascus ; that large stores of food-stuffs were being prepared ; that 3000 camels had been collected at Maan ; and that two staff officers had returned from Akaba after studying the possibility of a movement across the desert. This report was supplemented by another of the same date to the effect that it was intended to send a large number of men from Homs to Damascus by rail, between September 20 and 23, and that a great concentration converging towards the south was expected. From a third report, which was received subsequently, it appears that another 5000 camels had been requisitioned at Maan ; that all the rolling-stock of the southern section of the Hedjaz Railway was being concentrated at Deraa ; and that the Mosul troops had reached Tel-Abiad, near Aleppo.

A report, dated the 21st instant, stated that there was cumulative evidence to show almost certainly that an attack against Egypt on a large scale would take place in the very near future ; that the troops would advance on both sides by way of Akaba and by way of El Arish ; and that a large provision of things necessary for their transport across the desert was being prepared. A further report of the same date stated that camels and men had arrived at Damascus from Homs ; that thirty battalions were expected to arrive during the week ; that the chief staff officer from Damascus had proceeded to Maan ; and that the chiefs of the Bedouin tribes had left for the south after a conference with the Vali.

Constantinople, September 23, 1914.

ENCLOSURE 2 IN No. 143

Sir L. Mallet to Grand Vizier

Constantinople, October 2, 1914.

YOUR HIGHNESS,—In my communication of September 23 and subsequent letters of the 25th and 26th, various

military and other preparations in Syria, initiated by the Ottoman Government, were brought to the notice of your Highness, as likely to cause apprehensions to His Majesty's Government.

To the representations made in these communications, no written reply has yet been received, and it appears that not only has the verification of the details already given been confirmed, but further news of a disquieting nature has now arrived. For instance, the transport of food-stuffs, military stores, and material of war to Maan continues. As this place is in nowise a Turkish military centre in peace, and has no connection with a mobilisation of the Syrian divisions in their ordinary stations, but is, on the other hand, in proximity to the Egyptian frontier. His Majesty's Government would desire to be informed why it is considered necessary to make the preparations in question, which are evidently for the maintenance of a considerable body of troops or for their transit farther in the direction of Akaba.

2. Similar preparations are also apparently being made on the road Jenin-Nablus-Jerusalem, and the collection of a camel corps at the latter place was announced yesterday. These measures tend to show a projected concentration of troops on the limits of Syria to the west, and again in proximity to the Egyptian frontier.

3. The above steps have latterly coincided with the sudden arrival of Colonel Kress von Kressenstein and six other German officers, with the result that it is openly rumoured in Syria that the Jerusalem division is preparing to move towards Rafa and that of Damascus towards Akaba.

4. From Beirout arrive reports that the inhabitants are retiring inland, and from Haifa that the customs and railway staff have also been transferred from the coast. These measures are stated to be taken as precautionary steps against the hostile action of the British fleet, which is expected to ensue on the movement of Turkish forces against Egypt.

5. In view of all these circumstances, it is undoubtedly the case that it is fully believed in Syria that an offensive movement against Egypt is contemplated by the Ottoman authorities, and, although His Majesty's Government do not necessarily share this view, they cannot but regard any

continuance of the military movement in anything but the most serious light.

6. Apart from recognised military measures, the movements of a German engineer belonging to the Bagdad Railway with a large consignment of explosives destined for an attempt on the Suez Canal has already been brought to your Highness's notice in my letter of the 25th ultimo.

Not only have the movements of this individual been confirmed, but the departure of a German naval officer named Hilgendorff is now also announced with the same purpose. This individual has left Petra with a party of eight Germans, ostensibly on a shooting expedition, but with a large amount of stores, including explosives, and intending to meet another similar party journeying *via* Haifa-Amman.

As both these parties are acting from neutral territory with the avowed intention of committing acts hostile to Great Britain, it is incumbent on the Porte to secure their apprehension, coupled with an assurance that all necessary steps will be taken to put an end to any enterprise of this nature.

I have been repeatedly assured by your Highness and by other members of the Ottoman Government that Turkey is firmly determined to maintain an attitude of strict neutrality during the European war. To these assurances I have been unfortunately obliged to reply that the Ottoman Government have failed in several most essential particulars to maintain their neutrality, and I would now desire to point out, with all the emphasis at my command, that, if these preparations continue, only one conclusion can be deduced—namely, that the Ottoman Government are taking preliminary steps to send an expedition against Egypt and that they are conniving at the preparation of a plot against the Suez Canal on the part of German subjects, who are either in the Ottoman service or are acting independently.

I cannot too earnestly impress upon your Highness the absolute necessity of putting an end to this situation of uncertainty at the earliest moment possible, in order that those relations of confidence and sincerity may be restored between the two Governments which it has constantly been my object to foster.—I avail, etc.

LOUIS MALLET.

No. 148

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October* 19)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October* 19, 1914.

New Governor-General of Basra with six army officers, including two German officers, also six naval officers, including two Germans, and 150 Turkish sailors with three columns of ammunition, arrived at Alexandretta on morning of October 18 by railway from Constantinople. Their final destination is believed to be Basra. I am also informed that Maan is their true destination.

No. 149

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October* 19)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October* 19, 1914.

Within last few days following have passed through Adana in direction of Syria : 450 gendarmes with 600 sailors, of whom 200 were German, 52 German naval and military officers, a commandant of police, 45 civilian officials, of whom two were German, 10 engines, and 3 or four automobiles, said to contain German officers.

No. 150

Mr. Cheetham to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October* 19)

(Telegraphic.) *Cairo, October* 19, 1914.

I am informed that Bimbashi Gamil, staff officer in Turkish army, Khoga (Imam) Ali Haider, Khoga (Imam) Amin, and Khoga (Imam) Rustom, have left Smyrna in order to carry on a Turcophile propaganda in India.

No. 152

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October* 22)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October* 21, 1914.

Battery of six guns which left Constantinople on 11th instant, and which I think were heavy guns, have, together

with aeroplane, arrived at Alexandretta and left for the south.

Since October 18 there have been no movements of troops to or from Damascus. Some trucks of ammunition went round by rail to Nablus Sidi, and cases of rifles arrived from Aleppo.

No. 154

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October 22*)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October 22*, 1914.

A manifesto, the authorship of which is attributed to Sheikh Aziz Shawish, is being secretly circulated at Beirout. Manifesto bears alleged signatures of ten representatives of Moslem countries under foreign rule. It incites Moslem soldiers to mutiny in their respective countries in defence of Islam, and bids them desert the Allies and join Germany. Whole tenor is fanatical and inflammatory.

No. 155

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October 22*)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October 22*, 1914.

My immediately preceding telegram.

I understand that several thousand copies of manifesto are to be smuggled into Egypt and India and other Moslem countries through Syria.

No. 156

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, October 22*, 1914.

German officers now on frontier seem bent on forcing matters. General Officer Commanding Egypt anticipates Arab raid at any moment at their instigation.

No. 161

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October* 24)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October* 23, 1914.

Twenty projectors, 10 electric mines, 4 electric motors, 500 cases of Mauser ammunition have arrived via Rustchuk in addition to arrivals already reported previously.

No. 162

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October* 24)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October* 23, 1914.

Very large quantities of bar gold have recently arrived. Nearly a million's worth was taken to Deutsche Bank three nights ago under escort, and there is information that previous consignments have been similarly conveyed. It is probable that between two and three millions have arrived altogether.

No. 163

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October* 24)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October* 23, 1914.

German named Kellerman has just left Aleppo for Haifa or the south. Two thousand camels, 1500 water-skins, 400 bicycles, all canvas and canvas bags, together with food-stuffs, are being requisitioned in Aleppo.

Information goes to show that an Arab raid has been possible during last few weeks, and contingency has certainly to be watched.

No. 166

Sir Edward Grey to Sir L. Mallet

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, October* 24, 1914.

Your telegram of October 23[1] gives the impression that Turkey considers sending an armed force over the frontier of Egypt as being in some way different from acts of war

[1] [See No. 164, *Naval*, 2, p. 143.]

against Russia. You should disabuse the Turkish Government of any such idea, and inform them that a military violation of frontier of Egypt will place them in a state of war with three allied Powers.

I think you should enumerate to Grand Vizier the hostile acts of which we complain, and warn him that, if German influences succeed in pushing Turkey to cross the frontiers of Egypt and threaten the international Suez Canal, which we are bound to preserve, it will not be we, but Turkey, that will have aggressively disturbed the *status quo*.

The following is a convenient summary of Turkish acts of which we complain, and which, combined, produce a most unfavourable impression. You might send it to Grand Vizier :

' The Mosul and Damascus Army Corps have, since their mobilisation, been constantly sending troops south preparatory to an invasion of Egypt and the Suez Canal from Akaba and Gaza. A large body of Bedouin Arabs has been called out and armed to assist in this venture. Transport has been collected and roads have been prepared up to the frontier of Egypt. Mines have been despatched to be laid in the Gulf of Akaba to protect the force from naval attack, and the notorious Sheikh Aziz Shawish, who has been so well known as a firebrand in raising Moslem feeling against Christians, has published and disseminated through Syria and probably India, an inflammatory document urging Mohammedans to fight against Great Britain. Dr. Prüffer, who was so long engaged in intrigues in Cairo against the British occupation, and is now attached to the German Embassy in Constantinople, has been busily occupied in Syria trying to incite the people to take part in this conflict.'

No. 168

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 27)

(Telegraphic.) *Petrograd, October 26, 1914.*

Forty-two Germans, disguised as tourists, are said to have arrived at Aleppo. They are members of General Staff and of crews of *Goeben* and *Breslau*. It is believed

that they have 150 mines with them. Some of the officers are bound for Bagdad and Basra, others for Beirout and Tripoli.

No. 169

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October 27*)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October 27, 1914.*

Enver Pasha, Jemel, and Talaat Bey, are making every preparation for an expedition against Egypt, which is evidently now their uppermost thought. A majority of the Committee are, however, said to be against war, and are showing considerable opposition to the scheme. I am unable to vouch for this, but the news appears to be fairly well authenticated. Halill Bey started for Berlin this morning, and he is said to be about to negotiate with the German Government. It seems difficult to explain his journey on any other hypothesis than that the Turks wish to postpone any decisive action.

No. 172

Mr. Cheetham to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October 28*)

(Telegraphic.) *Cairo, October 28, 1914.*

I have received reliable information that some German officers unsuccessfully endeavoured to persuade commandant of Turk post to attack our post at Kossaimo, and that, on making further efforts with this object, they were arrested and sent to Beersheba. If true, story shows desire of Germans to precipitate matters.

No. 173

Mr. Cheetham to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October 28*)

(Telegraphic.) *Cairo, October 28, 1914.*

Two thousand armed Bedouins are advancing to attack the Canal, and have watered at Magdaba, which is twenty miles inside Egyptian frontier, October 26.

No. 176

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October* 29)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October* 29, 1914.

I have seen the Grand Vizier and informed him that, in spite of his assurances, the Bedouins had crossed the frontier and were in occupation of wells of Magdaba, twenty miles within Egyptian territory. I reminded him of the warning which I had addressed to him on account of instructions contained in your telegram of October 24,[1] and asked him for explanation. His Highness replied that he had instructed Minister of War, after representations which I had made to him, on no account to allow movement of any force across the frontier. If it were true, he would give immediate orders for recall of Bedouins, but he did not believe accuracy of the information.

I replied that it was necessary at such a crisis that I should speak quite frankly, that it was a matter for public notoriety that there were divisions of opinion in the Cabinet, that His Highness was not master of the situation, and that, if Minister of War and extremists had decided upon an expedition against Egypt, His Highness could not prevent it. Grand Vizier replied that I was absolutely mistaken, and that, if it came to that, military party would not act without full assent of the Government. I said that in that case the time had come to put them to the test, and that unless expedition were immediately recalled, I could not answer for the consequences. As it was, I might at any moment receive instructions to ask for my passports, in which case Turkish Government would be at war with the Triple Entente at a time when German official *communiqués* admitted defeat on the Vistula.

No. 180

Sir L. Mallet to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received October* 31)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October* 30, 1914.

Russian Ambassador asked for his passports this afternoon, and I and my French colleague have followed suit.

[1] See No. 166.

Minister of the Interior, in conversation with a neutral colleague this afternoon, practically admitted that Turkey had thrown in her lot with Germany.

I have had a very painful interview with the Grand Vizier, who had been kept in the dark as to his colleagues' intentions, and who will doubtless be set aside to-night.

DESPATCH FROM HIS MAJESTY'S AMBASSADOR AT CONSTANTINOPLE SUMMARISING EVENTS LEADING UP TO RUPTURE OF RELATIONS WITH TURKEY, AND REPLY THERETO [1]

MISCELLANEOUS, No. 14 (1914) [Cd. 7716].

[*In continuation of* 'Miscellaneous, No. 13 (1914)': Cd. 7628.]

SIR, *London, November* 20, 1914.

. . . . . .

On land, the officers of the German military mission displayed a ubiquitous activity. Their supremacy at the Ministry of War, combined with the close co-operation which existed between them and the Militarist party, made it easy to fortify an already strong position. Acting in conjunction with other less accredited agents of their own nationality, they were the main organisers of those military preparations in Syria which so directly menaced Egypt, and which became a serious source of preoccupation and a constant theme of my remonstrances.

The evidence of these preparations became daily more convincing. Emissaries of Enver Pasha were present on the frontier, bribing and organising the Bedouins. Warlike stores were despatched south, and battalions of regular troops were posted at Rafah, whilst the Syrian and Mosul army corps were held in readiness to move south at short notice. The Syrian towns were full of German officers, who were

[1] [Extract. The complete despatch will be found in *Naval*, 2, pp. 158-171.]

provided with large sums of money for suborning the local chiefs. As an illustration of the thoroughness of the German preparations, I was credibly informed that orders were given to obtain estimates for the making of Indian military costumes at Aleppo in order to simulate the appearance of British Indian troops. Under directions from the Central Government the civil authorities of the Syrian coast towns removed all their archives and ready money to the interior, and Moslem families were warned to leave to avoid the consequences of bombardment by the British fleet. The Khedive himself was a party to the conspiracy, and arrangements were actually made with the German Embassy for his presence with a military expedition across the frontier.

However difficult it would have been for the Ottoman Government to regain their control over the armed forces of the State after the arrival of the *Goeben* and *Breslau*, the insidious campaign carried on with their encouragement by means of the press, the preachers in the mosques, and the pamphleteers, is evidence that its most powerful members were in sympathy with the anti-British movement. I had, indeed, actual proof of the inspiration by Talaat Bey and Djemal Pasha of articles directed against Great Britain. Every agency which could be used to stimulate public opinion in favour of Germany and to inflame it against the Allies was set at work with the connivance, and often with the co-operation, of the Turkish authorities. All the Turkish newspapers in Constantinople became German organs; they glorified every real or imaginary success of Germany or Austria; they minimised everything favourable to the Allies.

The enclosures in an earlier despatch will have shown to what depths of scurrility some of the more corrupt and unbridled of them descended in their onslaughts on Great Britain, and how unequally the censors of the press held the balance when exercising their practically unlimited powers. The provincial papers were no less enthusiastically pro-German; the semi-official telegraphic agency, which is practically worked by the Ministry of the Interior, was placed at the disposal of German propaganda. Through these agencies unlimited use was made of Turkey's one concrete and substantial grievance against Great Britain as distinguished from other European Powers, that is, the detention

of the *Sultan Osman* and the *Reshadie* at the beginning of the European war. Other grievances, older and less substantial, were raked out of the past; and the indictment of Great Britain and her allies was completed by a series of inventions and distortions of the truth designed to represent them as the enemy, not merely of Turkey, but of the whole of Islam. Attacks of the latter kind became especially frequent in the latter half of October, and were undoubtedly directly inspired by Germany. My urgent representations to the Grand Vizier and to Talaat Bey, both verbal and written, had hardly even a temporary effect in checking this campaign.

It may seem strange that, thus equipped and thus abetted, those who sought to involve Turkey in the European war failed so long to achieve their object. The reasons were manifold. As I have already indicated, the party which stood for neutrality contained men who, lacking though they were in any material means of enforcing their views, could not easily be ignored. By whatever various routes they may have been arrived at, the ideas of these men coincided with a body of less sophisticated and hardly articulate opinion which, however wounded by England's action in preventing delivery of the *Sultan Osman* and the *Reshadie*, could still not reconcile itself to a war with England and France. In my despatch of 22nd September I had the honour to report how frankly and how emphatically the Sultan himself voiced this feeling in conversation with me. There can be little doubt that the Grand Vizier exercised what influence he had in favour of neutrality. Djavid Bey, the Minister of Finance, whose influence in favour of neutrality was of weight as representing the Jewish element, and whose arguments in favour of peace were supported by the fact that Turkey was already absolutely bankrupt, and not in a position to embark upon war with the Allies, became towards the end so formidable an obstacle to the fulfilment of the German plan that instructions were sent from Berlin to force his resignation.

Again, seriously convinced as most prominent Turks appear to have been of the ultimate success of Germany, their confidence could not but be a little dashed by the actual course of events in the two main theatres of war; and the more thoughtful realised that even in the event of Germany being victorious, the fact of Turkey having fought by her

side would not necessarily ensure any advantage to the Ottoman Empire. As for the Germans themselves, it was true, as I have said, that they could at any moment force Turkey to march with them, but to do so before every means of suasion had proved useless would obviously not have been politic. It was clearly only in the last resort that the Monarch whom Pan-Islamic pro-Germans acclaimed as the hope of Islam, and whom the devout in some places had been taught to regard as hardly distinguishable from a true believer, would run the risk of scandalising the Moslem world, whom he hoped to set ablaze to the undoing of England, Russia, and France, by using the guns of the *Goeben* to force the hands of the Sultan-Caliph. But the factor which more than any other delayed the realisation of the German plans, and which enabled me and my French and Russian colleagues to protract the crisis until they could only be realised in such a way as to open the eyes of the Moslem world to the real nature of the conspiracy, was the inherent tendency of Turkish statesmen to procrastinate, in the hope that by playing off one side against the other they might gain more in the long run.

However slender the chances in our favour, it was obviously my duty, in conjunction with my French and Russian colleagues, to support and encourage by all possible means those forces which were obscurely striving for the preservation of peace.

If this policy necessarily involved the acceptance of acts on the part of the Ottoman Government which, in ordinary circumstances, would have called for more than remonstrance and the reservation of our rights, and which it would have been easy to make the occasion of a rupture of relations, the patience displayed by the Allies was justified by the results achieved.

Although unsuccessful in averting war, two objects of main importance were gained by delaying its commencement. On the one hand, the Allied Powers are now in a position to deal with the problem with a freer hand, and, on the other, Germany has been forced to show her cards and to act independently of a majority of the Turkish Cabinet.

Under the stress of events in the main theatre of the war, and owing to the vital necessity of providing a diversion in

the Near East, Germany was constrained to intensify still further their pressure on the Turks. During the first three weeks of October their pressure took yet another form, and a new weight was cast into the scale by the importation into Constantinople, with every circumstance of secrecy, of large quantities of bullion consigned to the German Ambassador and delivered under military guard at the Deutsche Bank. The total amount was estimated at some £4,000,000. This sum was far more than was necessary for the maintenance of the German military and naval establishments, and I have every reason to believe that a definite arrangement was arrived at between the Germans and a group of Ministers, including Enver Pasha, Talaat Bey, and Djemal Pasha, that Turkey should declare war as soon as the financial provision should have attained a stated figure. My information establishes the fact that a climax was reached about the middle of the third week in October, when it had been decided to confront the Grand Vizier with the alternative of complicity or resignation, and that only the Russian successes on the Vistula, or some other more obscure cause, prevented this plan from being carried out.

Whatever the exact history of the first three weeks of October, it is certain that on or about the 26th of that month the German conspirators realised that the pace must be forced by still more drastic measures than they had yet used, and that any further attempts to win over the Grand Vizier and the Turkish Government as a whole to their ideas and to induce them to declare war would be useless. On that afternoon an important meeting of Committee leaders was held, at which Enver Pasha was present, but which only decided to send Halil Bey, the President of the Chamber, on a mission to Berlin. In the circles in which this decision became known it was regarded as a partial triumph for the Peace party, and as a fresh attempt to gain time for the sake either of mere procrastination or of securing more concrete offers from Germany. Be that as it may, Halil Bey never left on his mission, and it is believed that its abandonment was due to a more than usually blunt hint from the German representative in Constantinople. Whilst Constantinople generally was comforting itself with the reflection that nothing could well happen until after the four days' Bairam festival,

beginning on October 30, two events of capital importance occurred.

On the morning of the 29th I received intelligence from Egypt of the incursion into the Sinai peninsula of an armed body of 2000 Bedouins, who had occupied the wells of Magdaba, and whose objective was an attack upon the Suez Canal. On learning this news I at once proceeded to the Yali of the Grand Vizier, to acquaint him of the serious consequences which must ensue if the expedition were not at once recalled. His Highness received the intelligence with every appearance of surprise. He emphatically disclaimed all knowledge of it, and gave me the most solemn assurance that if the facts were as stated he would at once issue orders for the withdrawal of the invading party. He assured me once more that nothing was further from the intention of the Government than war with Great Britain. It was unthinkable, he said, that an expedition of this kind could have been organised by any member of the Government; and he felt certain that if anything of the kind had occurred, it could only have been a raid by irresponsible Bedouins. I told His Highness that I feared that he deceived himself. I reminded him of the various occasions on which he had given me similar assurances, and of the negative results of the instructions which he had given on previous occasions. I warned him of the disastrous consequences to the Ottoman Empire of a crisis which could not now be long postponed unless he and the friends of peace were prepared to take some serious stand against the conspiracy of which I was fully cognisant, to involve it irretrievably in the general war. On this, as on every occasion of my interviews with the Grand Vizier, I was impressed with his inability to realise the facts or to disabuse himself of the conviction, in spite of his many unfortunate experiences, that he would be able in a really serious crisis, to exert his authority with effect.

The second event of capital importance was the attack on Odessa and other Russian ports in the Black Sea on the morning of the same day, October 29. It is now certain that the actual orders for these attacks were given by the German admiral on the evening of October 27, but it was not until after they had actually taken place, that is, on the afternoon of October 29, when news of the raid on Odessa

was telegraphed to me direct by Mr. Consul-General Roberts, that my Russian and French colleagues and myself realised that the die had actually been cast and the crisis that we had so long feared and striven to avert had occurred. Immediately on receiving the news M. Bompard and I called on M. de Giers and decided to ask for authority from our respective Governments to confront the Porte with the alternative of rupture or dismissal of the German naval and military missions. On the morning of the 30th, however, I learnt from my Russian colleague that he had received instructions from his Government immediately to ask for his passports. He had written to the Grand Vizier to ask for an interview, which His Highness had begged him to postpone until the following day owing to indisposition. The instructions of my Russian colleague being in a categorical form, he had therefore been constrained to address a note to the Grand Vizier demanding his passports, and I and my French colleague, acting on the instructions with which the Ambassadors of the Allied Powers had at my suggestion already been furnished to leave Constantinople simultaneously, should any one of them be compelled to ask for his passports, owing either to a Turkish declaration of war or to some intolerable act of hostility, decided without further delay to write to the Grand Vizier and ask in our turn for interviews to enable us to carry out these instructions. In view of His Highness's indisposition we had not expected to be received that day, but a few hours later the Grand Vizier sent us word that he would, nevertheless, be glad to see us, and notwithstanding the excuse which he had made earlier in the day he received the Russian Ambassador also in the course of the afternoon. My interview with the Grand Vizier partly coincided with that of M. de Giers, and preceded that of M. Bompard. It was of a painful description. His Highness convinced me of his sincerity in disclaiming all knowledge of or participation in the events which had led to the rupture, and entreated me to believe that the situation was even now not irretrievable. I replied that the time had passed for assurances. The crisis which I had predicted to His Highness at almost every interview which I had had with him since my return had actually occurred, and unless some adequate satisfaction were immediately given by the dismissal of the German missions, which

could alone prevent the recurrence of attempts upon Egyptian territory and attacks on Russia, war with the Allies was inevitable. My Russian colleague had already demanded his passports, and I must, in pursuance of the instructions I had received, follow the same course. The Grand Vizier again protested that even now he could undo what the War party had done without his knowledge or consent. In reply to the doubt which I expressed as to the means at his disposal, he said that he had on his side moral forces which could not but triumph, and that he meant to fight on to the end. He did not, indeed, hint at a possibility of immediately dismissing the German mission, but he informed me that there was to be a meeting of the Council at his house that evening, when he would call upon his colleagues to support him in his determination to avert war with the Allied Powers.

The Council was duly held, and, as he had predicted, the majority of the Ministers supported the Grand Vizier, who made a strong appeal in favour of peace, and was seconded by Djavid Bey. But the powerlessness of the Sultan's Ministers to do more than vote in the Council Chamber was evident. The question of dismissing the German naval officers was discussed, but no decision to do so was taken, and no Minister ventured to propose the expulsion of the military mission. In the interval the War party had sealed their resolution to go forward, by publishing a *communiqué* in which it was stated that the first acts of hostility in the Black Sea had come from the Russian side. Untrue and grotesque as it was, this invention succeeded in deceiving many of the public.

TURKISH MOBILISATION

Reuter's Agency has received the following :—

'The Ottoman Consulate-General beg to inform the Ottoman Reservists living in Great Britain that the general mobilisation of the Imperial Ottoman Army and Navy having been ordered (with the exception of 7th Army Corps and the independent 22 and 23 Divisions), the Ottoman Reservists can apply to the Turkish Consulate-General, 7 Union Court, Old Broad Street, London, E.C., for full particulars.'

Times, Aug. 5, 1914

Reuter's Agency learns from a well-informed diplomatic source that the Turkish Army will be under the command of General Liman von Sanders, the chief of the German Military Mission in Turkey.

Constantinople, August 8.

Times, Aug. 11, 1914

Mobilisation began to-day. All men under 45 years of age were called out in Constantinople district and probably in other commands. The first and second corps are to be employed upon defence in Thrace. The third, fourth, and fifth will probably be divided between Thrace, the Bosporus, and the Dardanelles forts. Adrianople and Dimotika are spoken of as probable points of concentration. The view is expressed in some quarters that Turkey may attempt a dash into Western Thrace and Macedonia should the attention of Bulgaria be diverted north.

Beirut, August 15.

Times, Sept. 1, 1914

The order for the mobilisation of the Turkish Army caused a general exodus of refugees for the Lebanon. Martial law was proclaimed and the town surrounded by troops to prevent any further escapes. All the horses, mules, and camels in the district, as also provisions and clothing, are being requisitioned by the Government, who are issuing bonds on Constantinople in payment. The troops are concentrating at Damascus, to be at the head of the Hedjaz Railway.

Several incidents have occurred which clearly show the sympathy of the Government for Germany. This feeling is shared by the Moslem element, though the Christians are all in favour of the Entente. Last week the German steamship *Peter Rickmers*, with a cargo, which included about 500 tons of dynamite, supposed to be destined for the Far East, was allowed by the Governor to enter the harbour and discharge the dynamite on the quay, in spite of the protests of the Port Company. This cargo is being sent up to Damascus by the French Railway.

A strict censorship is being exercised on all news bearing on the war, more especially on any successes by the Allies. Details of the latter, based on postal intelligence from Egypt, are promptly denied in the local newspapers by statements issued by the German Consulate, declared to have been received from the Embassy in Constantinople.

NOTICE TO GERMAN AND AUSTRIAN SUBJECTS IN EGYPT

Journal Officiel du Gouvernement Egyptien, Nov. 2, 1914

I, John Grenfell Maxwell, Lieut.-General, Commanding the British Forces in Egypt, require that all German and Austro-Hungarian subjects, born of German or Austro-Hungarian parents, now residing in Egypt, do, before October the 10th next, register themselves at the Governorate or Mudiria-Headquarters of the town or province in which they reside.

Non-compliance with these orders will render such German and Austro-Hungarian subjects liable to arrest by the Military Authorities.

J. G. MAXWELL,
Lieut.-General.

Cairo, October 1, 1914.

MARTIAL LAW IN EGYPT: PROCLAMATION

By the General Officer Commanding His Britannic Majesty's Forces in Egypt

Notice is hereby given that I have been directed by His Britannic Majesty's Government to assume military control of Egypt in order to secure its protection. The country is therefore placed under Martial Law from this date.

(Signed) J. G. MAXWELL,
Lieutenant-General,
Commanding His Britannic Majesty's Forces in Egypt.

Cairo, November 2, 1914.

PROCLAMATION

I, John Grenfell Maxwell, Lieutenant-General Commanding His Britannic Majesty's Forces in Egypt, entrusted with the application of Martial Law, hereby give notice as follows :—

(1) The powers to be exercised under my authority by the Military Authorities are intended to supplement and not to supersede the Civil Administration, and all civil officials in the service of the Egyptian Government are hereby re-

quired to continue the punctual discharge of their respective duties.

(2) Private citizens will best serve the common end by abstaining from all action of a nature to disturb the public peace, to stir up disaffection, or to aid the enemies of His Britannic Majesty and his Allies, and by conforming promptly and cheerfully to all orders given under my authority for the maintenance of public peace and good order; and so long as they do so, they will be subject to no interference from the Military Authorities.

(3) All requisitions of services or of property which may be necessitated by military exigencies will be the subject of full compensation, to be assessed, in default of agreement, by an independent authority.

(Signed) J. G. MAXWELL,
Lieutenant-General
Commanding His Britannic Majesty's Forces in Egypt.

Cairo, November 2, 1914.

Cairo, November 2.

Times, Nov. 4, 1914

Martial law has been proclaimed here.

On account of their suspicious activities a wholesale arrest of Turkish emissaries has been effected. The Germans and Austrians were recently placed in a concentration camp, and the crews of enemy ships now at Alexandria have been deported to Malta.

Cairo, November 3.

The Government is taking precautions to prevent certain Egyptians from causing trouble. These individuals are being deprived of any chance of spreading discord.

A large number of Bedouin Sheikhs were summoned yesterday to the British Agency, where Lieutenant-General Sir John Maxwell addressed them, saying, 'Germany has been able by persistent efforts to induce certain men in power in Turkey to enter into Germany's views. Germany endeavours by pursuing the work of division and ruin to make Turkey quarrel with the Allies. The Government has therefore convoked the Arab Notables, enjoining them that, if such is Germany's project, their duty is to remain calm and enjoy the peace and tranquillity on Egyptian soil which the British forces ensure. If the Government finds it necessary to appeal

to their devotion to serve the country the Government is fully confident of their reply to its appeal.'

The Notables thanked the Government for the confidence placed in them and assured Sir John Maxwell of their loyalty.—*Reuter.*

RAIDS ON EGYPTIAN FRONTIER

Constantinople, October 31.

It has been ascertained, though not absolutely confirmed, that an armed party of Bedouins, 2000 strong, have invaded Egyptian territory and reached a point over 20 miles inside the frontier. *Times*, Nov. 2, 1914

Many British subjects left yesterday, and others were preparing to follow. Russian and French subjects were also leaving. Yesterday the police prevented a number of British subjects from leaving. These now pass under the protection of the American Embassy.

The Turkish acts of war in the Black Sea, although feared for some time past, nevertheless came as a thunderbolt, and produced the utmost consternation in all circles, including the peace party in the Cabinet and all sane-thinking Turks, who are profoundly grieved at the catastrophe which has befallen the country.—*Reuter.*

Cairo, November 1.

Bedouin chiefs came to Cairo from all parts of Egypt to-day to assure the Government and the British Agency of their loyalty. Quiet reigns everywhere, but as a precautionary measure a Press censorship has been established. A declaration of martial law is momentarily expected.

Constantinople.

General Headquarters states:—With God's help the Egyptian frontier was yesterday crossed by our troops. Since the Russian fleet has withdrawn to its war harbours, our Fleet has bombarded Poti, one of the most important ports of the Caucasus, and has inflicted all kinds of damage. Our gendarmes and the tribes taking our side have annihilated the English troops which had landed at Akaba. Four English ironclads which were there have now withdrawn, and only a single cruiser remains. *K. V.*, Nov. 8, 1914

Berlin, November 12, 1914.

Times, Nov. 13, 1914

The Turkish troops which crossed the Egyptian frontier now occupy El Arish and Sheikazar, and have captured four British field-guns.—*German Wireless.*

PROCLAMATION TO THE TURKISH ARMY

Amsterdam, November 14, 1914.

Times, Nov. 15, 1914

Enver Pasha, the Ottoman Minister of War, has, according to a telegram received from Berlin, made the following proclamation to the Turkish Army :—

'Comrades! I am honoured to announce to you the noble Irade of the Caliph. Our Army will destroy our enemies with the help of Allah and with the assistance of the Prophet and the pious prayers of our Sovereign. (Deletion by Censor.) Forward always to victory! Glory and Paradise are before us : Death and disgrace behind us! Long live our Padishah.'—*Reuter.*

RAIDS INTO EGYPT

Cairo, November 21, 1914.

Times, Nov. 22, 1914

Turkish Bedouin have made another raid into Egyptian territory, by crossing the Eastern frontier of the Sinai Peninsula, running from El Arish on the Mediterranean to Akaba on the eastern branch of the Red Sea.—*Reuter.*

The Press Bureau issues the following :—

Times, Nov. 23, 1914

A small affair of outposts has taken place between the enemy and the Bikanir Camel Corps in Egypt. The latter fought well and killed a number of the enemy ; their own losses amounting to thirteen missing.

Cairo, November 21.

Times, Nov. 23, 1914

Local interest is naturally centred on the Eastern frontier, but so far little of importance appears to have taken place east of the Suez Canal. Scouting parties are on the look-out, and to-day the military authorities announce that hostile cavalry and armed Bedouin have been encountered on the El Arish road near Bir Elabd, but that there is no sign anywhere of any movement of formed bodies of troops.

Cairo, November 23.

An official statement issued here says that on Friday (November 20) Captain Chope, of the Bikanir Camel Corps, and Lieutenant Mohamed Anis, with twenty of the Bikanir Camel Corps and twenty camelmen of the Coast Guard, were patrolling between Bir-el-Nuss and Katia. At seven in the morning Captain Chope, with the Bikanirs, pushed on in order to gain touch with the Coast Guard, who had camped half a mile ahead of him, but on arrival at their camp he found nothing except the traces of a fairly large number of tracks. *Times*, Nov. 25, 1914

He proceeded east, and an hour later saw ahead of him a party of about twenty men, mounted on white camels, waving white flags. Thinking they were the Camel Corps he allowed them to approach. When within 30 yards the enemy raised their rifles, whereupon Captain Chope gave the order to fire, and nearly all of them were killed. Another party of the enemy who attacked were similarly disposed of. Captain Chope, thinking all was over, advanced towards Katia, when suddenly about 150 horsemen were observed trying to move round his right flank, while a like number were working round the left flank. He therefore retired, dismounting his men, who fired as opportunity offered, while the enemy were firing from horseback. Lieutenant Mohamed Anis was shot during this period, but one of the Bikanirs took him up and carried him behind him on his camel, but, unhappily, both were shot.

Captain Chope succeeded in getting back to his supports, after beating off the enemy, with the loss of Lieutenant Anis, Subadar Abdu Khan, 12 men killed, and 3 men wounded. Nothing further was seen or heard of the Coast Guard patrols.

Cairo, November 26, 1914.

In the action fought between the Bikanir Camel Corps and Bedouin on November 20, 70 of the latter were killed, among them being three important sheikhs, one of them a brother of the Turkish commandant, Sinfi Pasha.—*Reuter*. *Times*, Nov. 27, 1914

Cairo, November 27, 1914.

The enemy has a small camp at Katia, but nowhere else in the Peninsula have his troops been encountered. Regarding the allegation of the Turks that they have captured guns at El Arish, the authorities state that these are antiquated *Times*, Nov. 28, 1914

muzzle-loaders which were not considered worth moving, as they were quite useless.

REPORTED ATTACKS ON SUEZ CANAL

Constantinople.

K. V., Nov. 22, 1914 — Headquarters officially report: Turkish troops have reached the Suez Canal. In an encounter near Kantara the English were beaten and took to flight with heavy losses.

Constantinople.

K. V., Nov. 22, 1914 — Further information from Headquarters states: With God's help our troops have occupied the Suez Canal. In the action which took place near Kataba and Kertebe, both 30 kilometres east of the Canal and near Kantara on the Canal itself, the English losses included Captain Wilson, one lieutenant, and many men killed, and a large number wounded. We have taken a fair number of prisoners. The English troops withdrew in disorderly flight. Men of the English camel corps who were stationed at the outposts and gendarmes in the English service surrendered to us.

London, December 6.

K. V., Dec. 6, 1914 — It is reported from Cairo, by *Reuter*, that the military authorities have flooded the desert to the east of Port Said in order to isolate the town.

(*From our Special Correspondent.*)

Cairo, December 11, 1914.

Times, Dec. 14, 1914 — According to the latest available information no Turks or armed Bedouin, with the possible exception of stray scouts, are anywhere near the Suez Canal. Persons who have arrived at Suez from Hedjaz say that there is a Turkish force on holy territory, but it is not large. The stock of provisions there is decidedly low.

THE TURKISH COMMANDER TO HIS TROOPS IN SYRIA

Constantinople.

Arab papers publish the following Army Order issued by the Commander to the troops of the Syrian Army told off for the attack on Egypt: 'Warriors! Behind you lie the vast deserts, before you is the craven enemy, behind him the rich land of Egypt which is waiting impatiently for your coming. If you falter death will overtake you, before you Paradise lies.' *K. V.*, Dec. 26, 1914

VON DER GOLTZ ON THE NEW TURKISH ARMY

(*From our Special Correspondent.*)

Amsterdam, December 29, 1914.

An interview with Marshal von der Goltz is quoted by the *Telegraaf* from the Berlin *Lokalanzeiger*. The Field-Marshal said:— *Times*, Dec. 30, 1914

'A successful Turkish attack in Egypt would be a stab in England's heart. With the preparation of an army for this object Turkey has done her full share as regards collaboration with her allies, and she can rest assured of a full share in the gains in the event of victory. The undertaking, however, is even less easy than an advance in the Caucasus, where the raw season and the small number of the roads offer the greatest difficulties. But the beginning made was good, and from the energy of the leading statesmen and soldiers of Turkey, it may be expected that they will accomplish all that is in any way possible. The extraordinary moderation of the Turkish soldier and his never-failing goodwill will render easy even the hardest campaign. I have seen but little of the troops yet, but what I have seen has pleased me exceedingly; since I crossed the frontier I have been heartily received and fêted by the soldiers and the authorities. The people have welcomed me as an old and faithful friend of the country. The guards of honour at the stations created the best impression. They were numerous, well clothed, and equipped.'

OPERATIONS IN THE PERSIAN GULF AND IN MESOPOTAMIA

Field Operations

Parl. Paper (Cd. 8074), 1915

No. 205.—The Governor-General [of India] in Council has much pleasure in directing the publication of the following letter from the Chief of the General Staff, dated the 2nd February, 1915, submitting despatches from Brigadier-General W. S. Delamain, C.B., D.S.O., and Lieutenant-General Sir A. A. Barrett, K.C.B., K.C.V.O., describing the operations of I.E.F. 'D' at the head of the Persian Gulf up to the 28th November 1914. The Governor-General in Council concurs in the opinion expressed by His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief regarding the manner in which the operations were conducted and the behaviour of the troops engaged. His Excellency in Council also shares the Commander-in-Chief's appreciation of the support rendered by the Royal Navy, which conduced so materially to the success of the operations.

From the Chief of the General Staff to the Secretary to the Government of India, Army Department, dated Delhi, February 2, 1915.

I am directed by His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief in India to submit for the information of the Government of India the under-mentioned reports on the operations of Indian Expeditionary Force 'D' up to the 28th November 1914:

(i) Report by Brigadier-General W. S. Delamain, C.B., D.S.O., on the operations of I.E.F. 'D,' up to the 14th November 1914; and

(ii.) Report by Lieutenant-General Sir A. A. Barrett, K.C.B., K.C.V.O., Commanding I.E.F. 'D,' on the operations of his force at the head of the Persian Gulf, from the 14th to the 28th November 1914.

2. His Excellency considers that the operations were conducted with skill and energy, and that the discipline and steadiness of the troops reflect the greatest credit on all ranks. He desires to commend to the favourable consideration of Government the officers, non-commissioned officers, and

men whose services are brought to notice in the reports, and wishes specially to invite attention to Lieutenant-General Sir Arthur Barrett's remarks in regard to the very valuable assistance rendered by the Royal Navy, which he cordially endorses.

3. His Excellency recommends that the reports be treated as despatches and published in the *Gazette of India.*

From Brigadier-General W. S. Delamain, C.B., D.S.O., Commanding 16th Brigade, I.E.F. 'D,' to the Chief of the General Staff, Simla, dated Camp Saniyeh, November 16, 1914.

On the arrival of Lieutenant-General Sir A. A. Barrett at this camp, and on conclusion of my period of independent command, I have the honour to report as follows:

2. The force under my command, known as I.E.F. 'D,' left Bombay on the 16th October in four transports, part of a large convoy. On 19th October we parted company and steered for Bahrain Islands, under escort of H.M.S. *Ocean.* No. 1 Brigade, Indian Mountain Artillery, joined the force off Jask on the 21st. We arrived on the 23rd and anchored off Manama. Here we remained until the 2nd of November.

3. On that date the Force sailed for the mouth of the Shatt-el-Arab in compliance with instructions contained in your radio-telegram No. 6571. Pilots were taken on board off Bushire, and the Force arrived at the outer bar of the river on the evening of the 3rd November.

4. The 4th and 5th November were occupied with naval preparations, and the transports themselves were prepared with bullet-proof cover on the upper decks for the use of parties detailed for covering fire.

Major Radcliffe, 2nd Dorset Regiment, returned from Kuweit on 5th with information that the Fort was in ruins, but that guns were in position. A landing force was detailed for the capture of Fao, under Lieutenant-Colonel H. L. Rosher, 2nd Dorset Regiment, and orders issued. On the 5th the transports crossed the outer bar of the Shatt-el-Arab and anchored just outside the inner bar.

5. At 6 A.M. on 6th November H.M.S. *Odin*, preceded by launches sweeping for mines, stood in and bombarded the Turkish guns outside the Fort, three miles south-east of the telegraph station at Fao. The hostile guns were soon silenced; they were well served for a time and hit the *Odin* twice. On the signal being made that the guns were silenced, the transports *Umaria* and *Varela* advanced in that order, each towing eight boats full of troops alongside; the *Mashona* (armed launch) towed seven boats full of troops, and the Royal Navy steam launches towed the detachment of Marines from H.M.S. *Ocean*. Off the telegraph station the boats were cast off and made for the shore. Some six hundred Infantry landed with one section Mountain Artillery, complete with mules, and one squad Sappers and Miners. There was no opposition. When the first and second reinforcements had also landed, Colonel Rosher assembled his force and marched south-eastwards to occupy the Fort. This was accomplished during the night of the 6th-7th, the guns were dismounted and thrown into the river, and Colonel Rosher's command returned to Fao.

6. While the troops who had landed were being re-embarked on the 7th November, the General Officer Commanding with remaining transports proceeded up the river till within sight of the Oil Refinery on Abadan Island. On the 8th of November the river was reconnoitred for a suitable landing place. A firm, high bank with deep water close up to it was found at Saniyeh; the transports were called up and troops began to disembark. The disembarkation continued during 9th and 10th November, being practically complete by evening of latter date.

7. It was proposed to advance from this camp and attack the Turks at Shamshumiya by land, but the reported advance of Turkish troops from Basra and the necessity of safeguarding the Oil Works, combined with the absence of news from India regarding the arrival of reinforcements, decided me to remain at Saniyeh. With the intention of an early forward movement, as little baggage and supplies as possible were landed at this camp. Reconnaissances both up and down stream on the 9th and 10th failed to discover any enemy.

8. On the evening of the 10th reliable news was received from the Sheikh of Mohammerah that Sami Bey, with a strong combined force of Turks and Arabs, had arrived from

Basra at a point opposite Mohammerah with the intention of attacking our camp. At 3 A.M. on the 11th the Sheikh reported that Sami Bey had started to make the attack. Troops were turned out and outposts strengthened. The Turkish force, of whom over three hundred were actually seen, delivered a determined attack at 5.30 A.M. on an advanced post held by one double company 117th Mahrattas with two machine-guns. They advanced to within fifty yards of the post, but were driven off by a dashing counter-attack delivered by the 20th Duke of Cambridge's Own Infantry, with the assistance of the 23rd Peshawar Mountain Battery. The enemy lost heavily in their retirement across the desert, nineteen dead were counted, fourteen wounded were brought in by us and six prisoners were taken. Abandoned rifles and equipment were found. The Turks officially acknowledged a loss of eighty men.

9. The defences of the camp were further strengthened and daily reconnaissances made. On the 14th November, Lieutenant-General Sir A. Barrett, with the 18th Brigade and Divisional Troops, arrived at this camp.

10. I would invite attention to the difficulties of communication in the Persian Gulf during the period covered by this report. Constant thunderstorms interrupted the wireless system. The installation on R.I.M.S. *Dalhousie* is apparently of poor quality, and the operators not very experienced. This ship had to be stationed at Bushire to connect with the cable there. The wireless station at Jask was frequently in communication with H.M.S. *Ocean*, in the sense that the station would answer the call of the warship, but it would not take in any message for transmission. No night watch is kept at Jask.

11. Several points to which I would earnestly invite attention are mentioned in the 'Notes' made at intervals in the 'War Diary' which is forwarded by the same mail as this report.

12. I would mention that the stay of the Force at Bahrain was of advantage, as it enabled me to have British and Indian Corps instructed in rowing and handling of boats and to rehearse the operation of a landing in force.

13. All ranks have performed their duties in a most zealous and creditable manner.

14. I would bring to notice the great assistance given me by the following officers in planning and carrying out the operations for the occupation of Fao and the landing at this camp :

Captain Hayes-Sadler, R.N., Senior Naval Officer, H.M.S. *Ocean.*

Commander Hamilton, Royal Indian Marine, Principal Marine Transport Officer.

15. I would also report that the masters of the various transports[1] gave all the assistance in their power. I would specially bring to notice the name of Mr. T. L. Mills, R.N.R., Master of the s.s. *Varela,* British India Steam Navigation Company, who displayed great zeal and willingness to perform operations beyond those usually required of a master of a merchant vessel. I trust that it will be found possible to recognise his services.

16. In connection with the Turkish night attack on the 11th November, I would report that the counter-attack I ordered on the attacking force was carried out in a most dashing and skilful manner by the 20th Duke of Cambridge's Own Infantry and the 23rd Peshawar Mountain Battery under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel C. Rattray, 20th Infantry.

Report of Operations of Indian Expeditionary Force 'D' from November 14 to 28, 1914

From Lieutenant-General Sir A. A. Barrett, K.C.B., K.C.V.O., Commanding Indian Expeditionary Force 'D,' to the Chief of the General Staff, Army Headquarters, Delhi. No. 101-*G, dated Basra, December* 7, 1914.

I have the honour to submit for the information of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, the following report of the operations of the troops under my command from the 14th to the 28th November 1914.

2. On the morning of the 14th November, the s.s. *Elephanta* with my Headquarters, and four other transports anchored in the river opposite Saniyeh, where Brigadier-General Dela-

[1] *Varela, Umaria, Umta, Berbera* (British India Steam Navigation Company), *Masunda.*

main's force was already bivouacked. The disembarkation of the troops was commenced at once. Infantry used the ships' boats, and experienced no difficulty in getting ashore. The landing of the guns, wagons and horses of the Field Artillery and of the cavalry horses in lighters and dhows was greatly delayed by the strong tide and current, the want of proper landing places, and by the shortage of lighters and steam craft for towing purposes. Every possible use was made of all the craft available, and with the hearty co-operation of the officers and men of the Royal Navy, the Indian Marine and the transports, considerable progress was made. The hatch covers of the transports were utilised as ramps for horses and guns, while excellent work was done by the Sapper companies.

3. In the course of the day I learnt from General Delamain of the presence of a hostile force at Saihan, four miles distant, and I ordered him to attack it the following morning. A full account of the action which ensued will be found in the attached report from General Delamain. I have already mentioned, in my telegraphic report of this action, my appreciation of the skilful and spirited manner in which this attack was carried out, and of the credit due to all who were engaged. The result was entirely satisfactory, as it enabled our advance on the 17th November to take place without our right flank being harassed.

4. Our information on the evening of the 16th was to the effect that a force of the enemy would probably be met with about Sahil and Zain, while his main body was believed to be in position at Balyaniyeh. At that time the whole of the cavalry, sappers, and the infantry of the 18th Brigade had been landed, but only one battery of the 10th Brigade, Royal Field Artillery. I was informed that the Sheikh of Mohammerah was apprehensive of an attack on Failieh from the enemy's forces on the left bank, and also that the attitude of the neighbouring Arabs would depend, to a great extent, upon our ability to make headway against the Turks without undue delay. I therefore decided that it would be in our best interests to advance at once, with the whole of the force then at my disposal, leaving the remaining field batteries to be disembarked as rapidly as possible and to follow us as soon as circumstances would permit.

5. A copy of operation orders issued for Tuesday the 17th November will be found attached.[1] My intention was to turn the enemy's right flank, and drive him through the palm groves on to the river, so that the two sloops, *Odin* and *Espiègle*, which moved up the river on a level with our advance, might be able to co-operate.

6. After leaving the bivouac we moved across the open desert, the surface of which, owing to recent rain, was still very muddy in places, though fortunately free from creeks or other obstructions.

At 8.50 A.M. a report was received from the advanced guard to the effect that the enemy's position extended from a ruined mud fort, which was plainly visible, somewhat to the right of our line of advance, north-westwards through Hassanain to Zain.[2] At 10 A.M. the enemy's guns opened fire. I then ordered the 110th Mahratta L.I. to reinforce the advanced guard and moved up the 16th Brigade on its right, leaving a space between the two brigades for the artillery to come into action, and retaining as reserves the 48th Pioneers and the 120th Infantry. Each of the two Brigade commanders had then at his disposal three battalions of infantry and a company of sappers, with the cavalry covering the left flank of the whole force, and the two sloops on the river to our right, though at some distance, with only the tops of their masts appearing above the belt of palm trees. The whole of the artillery, consisting of the 23rd and 30th Mountain Batteries, and the 63rd Battery, Royal Field Artillery, subsequently joined by three guns of the 76th Battery, which were hurried up during the action from the landing place, were placed under the Commander, Royal Artillery.

7. While these dispositions were being made, a heavy downpour lasting for half an hour came on. The front was entirely obscured, while the surface of the ground was converted into a quagmire ankle deep over which guns and horses could only move at a walk. The enemy's guns ceased firing, and I was in some doubt as to whether he intended to maintain his position. Our troops continued to advance steadily until 11.45 A.M., when the enemy simultaneously

[1] Appendix II.

[2] This report proved substantially correct, except that their position extended about ¾ mile to the south of Old Fort along the date-palm belt.

opened a heavy gun, rifle, and machine-gun fire along his whole front. Our artillery and infantry also came into action. After watching the course of the engagement for some time, I came to the conclusion that it would be advisable to abandon my original intention of turning the enemy's right, which extended some distance, and was echeloned back into broken ground and palm groves. The key of his position appeared to be the old mud fort. I therefore sent word to General Fry with the 18th Brigade to engage the enemy's right and centre with a frontal attack, while General Delamain with the 16th Brigade turned his left flank and captured the fort. At the same time I reinforced General Delamain with a battalion from the reserve. General Delamain had meanwhile anticipated my intentions, and had already commenced the turning movement. It was at this stage that a large number of casualties occurred on our right, especially in the 2nd Dorset Regiment, which had been the first to come into action, and had met with heavy fire in an exposed position, not only from the mud fort and trenches in front of it, but also from a body of the enemy entrenched on the edge of the palm groves behind and to the south of it. These Turkish regulars were using smokeless powder and were invisible from the point where the guns were in action, the latter being fully engaged with the enemy's artillery and with the long line of entrenchments on the main front Hassanain-Zain. The sloops on the river managed to put a few shells into the mud fort, but were soon obliged to desist owing to their view being obstructed by the belt of palm trees. The turning movement was very skilfully carried out by portions of the 104th Infantry, the 117th Mahrattas, and the 22nd Company Sappers and Miners, and was directed by General Delamain himself. The 18th Brigade and the main body of the 16th Brigade also pressed on steadily, supported by very efficient fire from our artillery. At 1.15 P.M. the whole of the enemy's line quitted its entrenchments, and fled rapidly to the right rear into the broken ground and palm trees, his guns covering the retirement, and finally being skilfully withdrawn from successive positions in the same direction under cover of long earthen embankments, which concealed them from view. The whole of our force advanced firing heavily and doing considerable execution, but the enemy's

losses would have been much greater if the state of the ground had not precluded rapid movement, more especially on the part of the cavalry and artillery.

Two abandoned mountain guns fell into the hands of the 7th Rajputs, who were on the left of the line, and numerous prisoners were captured.

At 2.50 P.M. I thought it advisable to issue orders for the pursuit to be stopped. The enemy were then retiring through the palm groves, with banks and mud walls affording facilities for defence, and their retirement was covered by distant fire from their guns. I had to form an entrenched camp before nightfall, and to bring in a large number of wounded, who were scattered over a considerable extent of country.

The enemy's losses have been variously estimated, and probably amounted to about 2000. Two days after the action sixty-nine dead bodies were found lying in one portion of the position. His total strength is estimated at 3000 Turks and 1500 Arabs, with twelve guns.

The troops bivouacked at Sahil on the banks of the river, with outposts on the line Sahil–Old Fort–to river bank.

The conduct of the troops throughout this engagement excited my warmest admiration. A very large majority of the men had never been under fire before, yet they behaved as steadily as if at an ordinary field-day, all the details of their training, as inculcated in peace time, being carried out automatically. The behaviour of the Dorset Regiment, when exposed to both frontal and enfilade fire, is especially to be commended. General Delamain has also brought to notice the 22nd Company Sappers and Miners, who were on the right of the Dorsets.

The enemy's guns were well served and cleverly handled, but fortunately the fusing of the shells was indifferent and the elevation generally too great. Their rifle fire was also too high, and not very effective at close quarters, otherwise our losses would have been much heavier. Our artillery suffered for want of observation posts, but in spite of this their fire was highly effective, and, as was afterwards ascertained, produced a demoralising effect on the enemy.

As may be gathered from the above report, the duties of the commanders of brigades and of other units, as also of the staff were carried out most efficiently. I propose to defer

bringing the names of individual officers to notice until the operations of this Force as a whole are finally recorded. At this stage I need only mention those who were especially conspicuous during the actions of the 15th and 17th, as set forth in the brigade commanders' reports attached.

The work of bringing in the wounded continued far into the night, and one ambulance party actually remained out all night, in spite of the fact that the enemy were firing on our piquets at intervals. I desire to pay a very high tribute to the personnel of the medical services, both for efficiency of organisation, and for devotion to duty. In addition to our own men, a large number of wounded Turks and Arabs had to be cared for and conveyed on board the transports, at a spot where shelving mud flats and a strong current made boating operations extremely troublesome and at times even hazardous.

On the afternoon of the 17th, it was blowing a hurricane for several hours, in the course of which three large dhows lying alongside the transports, laden with stores ready to disembark, were wrecked, and ten sepoys and two lascars were drowned.

On the 18th, 19th, and 20th we were employed in landing supplies and blankets for the troops, and in reconnoitring the enemy's position at Balyanieh, which was found to be at right angles to the river, with four guns in position on the bank, commanding the north end of Dabba Island, where the s.s. *Ekbatana* and two smaller craft had been sunk to block the ship channel. The naval sloops engaged these guns from below the obstruction, and, as was discovered afterwards, placed a shell inside the battery.

I formed a plan of attack to be carried out on the 22nd in which naval and military forces were to co-operate, but on the 21st I received trustworthy information, confirmed by our cavalry, that the enemy had vacated his position. The report stated that the Turks had quitted Basra and retired northward in boats to Baghdad, that numbers of armed Arabs had deserted, and that the town of Basra was in danger of being looted.

Accordingly, I ordered a forced march for 8 P.M. that evening, while the naval sloops were to proceed by river to Basra, and two battalions were hastily got on board shallow

draft steamers to follow them. We started across the desert at 8 o'clock, and at 12 noon the next day we reached the outskirts of Basra, after a march that was extremely trying to the troops. Frequent delays were caused by the high banks of water channels, which had to be levelled, and in some cases bridged to admit the passage of field-guns.

On arrival at Basra, we learned that the two sloops had got in at 9 P.M. the previous evening, and had succeeded in protecting the buildings on the river bank, to which no damage had been done, except the partial burning of the Custom House and destruction of its contents.

The two battalions had arrived at 9 A.M. on the 22nd, and were then patrolling the town, which was perfectly orderly.

I therefore decided to defer making a formal entry into the town until the next morning, as the troops were badly in need of food and rest, and it would have been difficult to arrange quarters for them until the place had been more fully examined.

On the 23rd the troops made a ceremonial march through the town to a selected spot near the mouth of the Ashar Creek, where the foreign Consuls and notables were assembled to meet us, and were presented to me by Mr. Bullard, our late Consul. A proclamation prepared by Sir Percy Cox was then read, the Union Jack was hoisted on a prominent building, a salute was fired from the sloops, the troops presented arms, and three cheers were given for His Majesty the King-Emperor. The German Consul and five other Germans were placed on board transports for conveyance to India.

We were cordially welcomed by the inhabitants, who appeared eager to transfer their allegiance to the British Government.

In concluding this report, I wish to lay stress upon the very great assistance that I have received throughout from Captain Hayes-Sadler, R.N., the Senior Naval Officer in the Persian Gulf, and the officers and men serving under him, without which it would have been quite impossible to bring these operations to a successful issue.

I am also much indebted to Sir Percy Cox for his advice and help on all occasions, and for the valuable and accurate information that he was able to procure for me, chiefly through the Sheikh of Mohammerah, who, at the risk of drawing upon

himself the hostility of the Turks, has spared no pains to prove himself our true friend and ally.

I reserve for a future report an acknowledgment of the good services done by the officers of the Royal Indian Marine, whose duties in connection with naval transport work have been most onerous.

We have also received very ready help throughout from the officers and men of the transports belonging to the British India Steam Navigation and other companies.

The following is a list of documents that accompany the report :

(1) Extract from Brigadier-General Delamain's report.
(2) Operation Order No. 1.
(3) Details regarding enemy engaged 17th November 1914.
(4) Commendations for conspicuous conduct.
(5) Maps [1] 4 miles to 1 inch.
(6) Sketch [1] map of action.

Appendix I

Extract from a Report by Brigadier-General W. S. Delamain, D.S.O., on the Operations of November 14, 1914

. . . . . .

Information from various sources went to show that Turkish troops were concentrating near Saihan only four miles west of our camp at Saniyeh ; and on the 14th November I received the Force Commander's instructions to reconnoitre and dislodge this hostile gathering without involving my own force too seriously. I thereupon issued Operation Order No. 1.

The force under my command consisted of the 30th Mountain Battery, the 2nd Battalion Dorset Regiment, and the 104th Rifles, with 23rd Mountain Battery and the 20th Infantry in camp held ready to reinforce if we became engaged.

The force marched at 6 A.M. from Camp Saniyeh, and on reaching the southern edge of the date palms turned westwards, the Advanced Guard (Major Clarkson, 1 Section

[1] Not reproduced.

Mountain Battery, 4 Companies 2nd Dorsets) keeping 1200 yards from the edge of the date groves and followed by the Main Body at approximately the same distance.

The march was continued in this order till the Advanced Guard was approximately south of Saihan village and creek at 7 A.M. At 7.10 A.M. the enemy opened fire on the Advanced Guard from two positions on the edge of the date groves with rifles and machine-guns and on the Main Body with artillery. The 104th Rifles were sent immediately to turn and capture the enemy's first position, and then to work through the date groves from the east. The Mountain Battery (2 Sections) assisted the 104th Rifles and 1 Section kept the hostile guns in the Turkish second position in check. The 104th took the first Turkish position in capital style about 8.30 A.M. At the same hour the reinforcements arrived from camp.

The Advanced Guard was then reinforced by the remaining half-battalion of the 2nd Battalion Dorset Regiment, and extended to their left so as to outflank the second Turkish position from the desert side. The 30th Mountain Battery was put under the orders of the Officer Commanding 2nd Battalion Dorset Regiment, who now commanded the Advanced Guard. The 20th Infantry (less 4 Companies) filled the gap between the Advanced Guard and the 104th Rifles on our right, leaving the 4 Companies of the 20th Infantry and 23rd Peshawar Mountain Battery in general reserve under my own hand. A general advance was then made on the second Turkish position, assisted by the admirably directed fire of both the Mountain Batteries, from which the enemy suffered severely. The position was entrenched and held by the Turks with determination. It was gallantly rushed by the 2nd Battalion Dorset Regiment, about 9.30 A.M. The enemy made off northwards through the date palms.

In the meanwhile, the 104th Rifles on our right found the ground inside the wood very difficult owing to the numerous irrigation cuts. They pushed forward slowly till they reached the line held by the 2nd Dorsets and the 20th Infantry, meeting with strong opposition at a fortified village, where there were posted one gun and one machine-gun.

The arrival of Turkish reinforcements from their force near Umm-ur-Rowais might now be expected at any minute.

In view, therefore, of my instructions not to get too seriously engaged, I ordered a withdrawal to camp, after doing considerable damage to the Turkish camp. The retirement was unmolested.

H.M.S. *Odin* co-operated in the action by steaming up the river parallel with the troops, but owing to the impossibility of observing fire through and over the belt of date palms, her fire was necessarily restricted to a minimum.

I estimated the enemy's strength at 1200, with four mountain guns and three machine-guns. From information given by prisoners the force appears to have been considerably stronger. I put their losses at 160 dead and wounded unable to move. We took prisoners six unwounded and nineteen wounded, including a battalion commander.

Our casualties came to :

Captain Maclean, 104th Rifles.
Lieutenant Yeatman, 2nd Battalion Dorset Regiment. } Severely wounded.

Rank and File.	Killed.	Wounded.	Missing.
2nd Battalion Dorset Regiment . .	5	38	Nil.
104th Rifles	3	14	,,
20th Infantry	—	2	,,
No. 1 Brigade, Indian Mountain Artillery	—	1	,,

The behaviour of all the troops was admirable. The co-operation between artillery and infantry was good.

I would mention that the information regarding the enemy obtained by Major H. Smyth, Special Service Officer, proved to be absolutely correct.

I bring to notice the good work done by the following :

(*a*) Lieutenant-Colonel H. L. Rosher, 2nd Battalion Dorset Regiment, who commanded the main attack on the enemy's position in an able manner.

(*b*) Major H. A. Holdich, Brigade Major, 16th Brigade. An able Staff Officer who gave me the greatest assistance during the engagement.

(*c*) Lieutenant E. B. Allnutt, R.A.M.C., in medical charge of the 2nd Battalion Dorset Regiment, reported

as having displayed great gallantry in attending the wounded on the open plain.

(*d*) Bugler Surain Singh, 20th Duke of Cambridge's Own Infantry, reported by the Officer Commanding 104th Wellesley's Rifles, as having very bravely set fire to a village held by the enemy.

. . . . . .

Appendix II

Operation Order No. 1 *by Lieutenant-General Sir A. A. Barrett, K.C.B., K.C.V.O., Commanding Force 'D,' dated Force Headquarters, Camp Saniyeh, November* 16, 1914.

(*Reference* 4 *miles to* 1 *inch map.*[1])

1. *Information.*—A considerable body of the enemy was driven out of their camp at Saihan yesterday with severe loss. Opposition may be expected from other bodies here and farther north-west.

2. *Intention.*—To march as light as possible to new camp on Turkish bank of river, all baggage, etc., being carried on ships. The Naval forces will co-operate under the orders of the Senior Naval Officer.

3. *Ammunition.*—Infantry must carry 200 rounds per rifle on person and other arms as much as possible.

4. *Starting point.*—The starting points are the three bridges south-west of the 16th Brigade camp; they will be marked by red lamps and flags by the 16th Brigade.

Head of Main Body to pass at 6 A.M.

Deputy Assistant Adjutant-General will control traffic.

5. *Advanced Guard.*—Officer Commanding—Major-General C. I. Fry. Guide—Captain Cochran.

Troops:

1 Squadron 33rd Light Cavalry.
1 Mountain Battery.
17th Company Sappers and Miners.
2 Battalions 18th Brigade.

[1] Not reproduced.

6. *Main Body* in order of march :

Cavalry less 1 squadron.
Force Headquarters.
Headquarters and Divisional Signal Section, No. 34 Divisional Signal Company.
Divisional Engineers less 1 Company Sappers and Miners.
Remainder 18th Infantry Brigade.
48th Pioneers.
Divisional Artillery, less 1 Mountain Battery.
16th Infantry Brigade, less 1¼ Battalions.
Field Ambulances (Bearer Sub-Divisions only) less those allotted to Brigades.
2nd Line Transport.

7. *Flank Guards.*—Right Flank Guard, Officer Commanding—Lieutenant-Colonel M'George, 117th Mahrattas.

Troops.—¾ Battalion 16th Brigade.

Left Flank Guard, Officer Commanding—Major Scott.

Troops.—1 Double Company 16th Brigade.

The Right Flank Guard to march 1000 yards west of date palms.

8. *Rear Guard.*—Officer Commanding, Major Robinson, 117th Mahrattas.

Troops.—1 Double Company 16th Brigade.

9. *Medical.*—Field Ambulances are allotted as follows :

16th Brigade $\frac{17}{B}$ B.F.A. $\frac{125}{A.B.C.}$ $\frac{\text{Bearer Sub-Division only.}}{\text{I.F.A.}}$
18th Brigade $\frac{16}{C}$ B.F.A. $\frac{126}{A.B.D.}$ I.F.A.
Unallotted $\frac{16}{D}$ B.F.A. and $\frac{125}{D}$ and $\frac{26}{C}$ I.F.A.

Sick and wounded will be carried with the force by these medical units.

10. *Transport.*—Pack transport will be allotted as follows at 4 P.M. to-day :

British Infantry . . .	50 pack mules per Battalion.
Indian Infantry . . .	38 ,, ,,
Mountain Artillery Brigade .	18
Royal Field Artillery Brigade	*Nil.*
Divisional Engineers . .	70
Pioneer Regiment . . .	53
Cavalry	50

Field Ambulances . . .	48 pack and 80 riding mules.
Divisional Signal Company .	23
Headquarters and Divisional Section and each Brigade Section	

Reports to Force Headquarters at head of main body.

R. N. GAMBLE, *Colonel*,
General Staff Force 'D.'

APPENDIX III

ENEMY ENGAGED IN THE BATTLE OF SAHIL, NOVEMBER 17, 1914

Estimated Strength

4 Q.F. Field-guns (3.25 in.).
8 Mountain guns.
3 Machine-guns.
3500 Regular Infantry.
200 Gunners.
350 Gendarmes.
Probably another 1000 armed Arabs in the palm belt.

They belonged to the following Regiments:

1st Battalion 113th Regiment.
2nd Battalion 113th Regiment.
2nd Battalion 112th Regiment.
160 men of 1st Battalion 26th Regiment, European Turks.
Gendarmes of Halim Bey.

Part of the 1st Battalion 114th Regiment was probably present.

The enemy were commanded by Bimbashi Adie Bey.

Enemy taken Prisoners

Major Mahomed Ali
Captain Raouf
Lieutenant Mahhi
} of 1st Battalion 113th Regiment.

47 men (excluding those severely wounded).

Estimated Enemy's Casualties

About 800 killed and severely wounded, and a considerable number of slightly wounded.

Captured

Two mountain guns and a large number of rifles.

Appendix IV

Extract from the Report of the General Officer Commanding 16th Infantry Brigade, on the Operations of his Brigade up to November 20, 1914

. . . . . .

I recommend for reward the following officers, non-commissioned officers, and men from those favourably brought to notice by Commanding Officers :

2nd Dorset Regiment

Major H. St. J. Clarkson, for gallantry.

Lieutenant and Adjutant F. G. Powell, for general assistance and conveying messages under heavy fire.

Second Lieutenant E. L. Stephenson, for commanding his company with conspicuous coolness and dash after his Major and Captain had been killed.

Lieutenant E. B. Allnutt, R.A.M.C., in medical charge, for again displaying conspicuous bravery in attending the wounded under heavy fire in the open. Many men owe their lives to this officer.

No. 3865 Colour-Sergeant and Acting Sergeant-Major Delara, for coolness and gallantry.

No. 8558 Private Moores, who showed great courage in bringing up ammunition under heavy fire.

No. 7712 Private Hughes, who, when the machine-gun officer was wounded, took command of the one uninjured gun, and, under heavy fire, brought it to close range, where it was of much use.

No. 6591 Sergeant Drew, who, though wounded, continued to lead his men with coolness and bravery.

3rd Sappers and Miners

Lieutenant Matthews, R.E., for gallantry in leading a mixed party of Sappers and 104th Rifles and establishing the flank attack on the edge of the date groves.

Jemadar Feroze Ali. After Captain Twiss and the Subadar were wounded, this Indian officer was in command of about 100 men, who did excellent work in spite of heavy casualties.

No. 2855 Naik Dalip Singh, No. 22 Company 3rd Sappers and Miners, behaved with conspicuous gallantry in the action at Sahil on the 17th November 1914, when, with a party of Sappers under Lieutenant Matthews, R.E., he showed himself very forward in action and led his squad with great determination into Turkish trenches.

104th Wellesley's Rifles

Captain Chadwick, for gallantry.

Subadar Sabal Singh (first in grove), ... } for gallantry with Lieutenant Matthews' party.
No. 2336 Lance-Naik Net Singh, }

117th Mahrattas

Captain and Adjutant E. G. Hall, for gallantry. This officer was severely wounded.

I regret that I omitted to bring to favourable notice the services of Mr. Bryant, the Marconi operator on board s.s. *Varela*, of the British India Steam Navigation Company. Mr. Bryant was untiring in his efforts to secure communication, and when the apparatus on the *Dalhousie* broke down, he volunteered instantly to go across from Bahrain to Bushire to set matters right. The force owed much to his skill and devotion to duty, and I trust that it may be found possible to recognise his services.

Extract from the Report of the General Officer Commanding 18th Infantry Brigade, on the operations of his Brigade up to November 20, 1914

. . . . . .

When all did well and where there was no opportunity for

conspicuous individual action, I have no special recommendations to make.

Extract from the Report of the Officer Commanding Royal Artillery, I.E.F. 'D' on the operations of the Artillery under his command up to November 20, 1914

. . . . . .

All ranks behaved with exceptional coolness and steadiness, and I wish to bring to notice the good work done by Lieutenant-Colonel Greer and Major Broke Smith throughout the action.

Extracts from Reports of the Assistant Director, Medical Services, Indian Expeditionary Force 'D,' in connection with the Service under his command up to November 20, 1914

I wish to bring to notice the especially excellent work done by the following Medical Officers during the engagement of the 17th instant :

Captain Wright, I.M.S., 126th Indian Field Ambulance.

Captain Hislop, I.M.S., 126th Indian Field Ambulance.

Captain Lambert, R.A.M.C., 17th British Field Ambulance.

Lieutenant Allnutt, R.A.M.C., Medical Officer, Dorset Regiment.

. . . . . .

The under-mentioned Assistant Surgeons and Sub-assistant Surgeons did conspicuously good work in attending the wounded under heavy fire on the 17th November 1914, and are recommended for promotion as stated opposite their names :

3rd Class Assistant Surgeon J. H. S. Huffton, to 1st Class Assistant Surgeon.

4th Class Assistant Surgeon J. H. T. Pacheco (wounded), to 3rd Class Assistant Surgeon of three years' standing.

No. 282 1st Class Sub-Assistant Surgeon V. U. R. Pandit, 104th Rifles, to 2nd Class Senior Sub-Assistant Surgeon.

No. 318 2nd Class Sub-Assistant Surgeon Shaikh Azimuddin-Shaik Ismail, to 2nd Class Senior Sub-Assistant Surgeon.

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORTS CONCERNING FOREGOING OPERATIONS

Times, Nov. 9, 1914

The Secretary of the Admiralty announces that a successful operation against Fao, at the mouth of the Shatt-el-Arab, Persian Gulf, has been conducted by a military force from India covered by H.M.S. *Odin* (Commander Cathcart R. Wason), the armed launch *Sirdar*, a force of Marines with a Maxim-gun party, and a boat from the *Ocean*.

The enemy's guns were silenced after an hour's resistance, and the town was occupied by the troops and the Naval Brigade. There were no naval casualties.

It is expected that no further opposition will be met with below Fao.

Times, Nov. 17, 1914

The Secretary of State for India communicates the following announcement regarding the military operations now in progress at the head of the Persian Gulf :—

Since the outbreak of war with Turkey a brigade from India, under the command of Brigadier-General W. S. Delamain, which was present in the Persian Gulf for the protection of British interests, has been engaged in operations against the Turks at the head of the Gulf, on the right bank of Shatt-el-Arab.

As was announced on November 8, the Turkish fort at Fao was silenced by fire from the ships accompanying the expedition, a portion of the force was landed, and the town was occupied by our troops. Since that date two actions, on November 11 and 15, have been fought with the Turkish forces, who on both occasions were very severely handled and defeated after a stubborn resistance. On the 11th inst., at 5.30 A.M., the Turks made a determined attack on our outposts, but were held in check by the 117th Mahrattas and finally routed by a counter-attack made by the 20th Infantry, supported by fire from a mountain battery. Our casualties were few ; those of the enemy at least eighty.

On the 14th further troops arrived from India under the command of Lieutenant-General Sir A. Barrett. On the 15th the latter, hearing that a strong force of the enemy with mountain artillery were occupying a post about four miles

distant, sent General Delamain with three battalions and two mountain batteries to evict them. After a sharp action, in which His Majesty's ships *Espiègle* and *Odin* co-operated, this was successfully accomplished. The enemy's entrenched camp was captured and his losses were very heavy.

Several prisoners, including a Turkish major, were captured and two of the enemy's machine-guns were destroyed. Our casualties were two officers wounded; rank and file, eight killed and fifty-one wounded.

Times, Nov. 20, 1914

The Secretary of State for India has received a report from the General in Command of the force operating on the Shatt-el-Arab (Persian Gulf), stating that an advance was made on November 17 for nine miles up the right bank of the river.

Our troops encountered a force of about 4500 of the enemy in a strong entrenched position with twelve guns, and, after overcoming a determined resistance and turning his left flank, carried the entrenchments. The enemy retired, losing two guns and many prisoners, including three officers; and his camp, containing his animal transport and reserve ammunition, was captured.

Our advance over open level plain, affording no cover, necessarily caused heavy losses; rapid movement of men and horses was impossible owing to the state of ground after heavy rain.

Our casualties were:—Killed—officers, three; rank and file, about 35. Wounded—officers, about 15; rank and file, about 300.

Troops behaved splendidly and are proud of their success. Medical officers did splendidly under heavy fire.

Times, Nov. 24, 1914

The Secretary of State for India communicates the following regarding the military operations at the head of the Persian Gulf.

The recent operations in the Persian Gulf have been crowned with even greater and more rapid success than was anticipated. After the signal defeat inflicted upon the Turkish forces on the 15th and 17th, the latter, abandoning all further resistance here, fled, leaving eight guns and many wounded in our hands. The Valis of Basra and Bagdad accompanied the defeated Turkish forces in their flight up

the Tigris. Basra was occupied on 21st instant by both our naval and land forces. All the British in Basra are reported safe.

TURKISH CLAIMS

Constantinople, November 16, 1914.

K. D., Nov. 16, 1914

Official report from Turkish Headquarters. Yesterday we attacked the English at Fao. They lost many killed, the number of which we estimate at 1000. Abdurrezak Bederkhani, who is held in abhorrence by the whole Mussulman community on account of the revolutionary intrigues to which he has devoted himself for a long time, had crossed the frontier with 300 men in the neighbourhood of Maku to assist the Russians, but he was at once driven back by our troops. A large number of his followers was killed. A Russian flag which they had hoisted in a neighbouring village was captured by our troops. Abdurrezak is a Kurd, and belongs to the tribe of the Bederkhani.

Constantinople.

K. V., Nov. 21, 1914

An official report from Headquarters says: The cruiser *Hamidieh* yesterday bombarded and destroyed the Russian oil depots and the wireless station at Tuapfe in the neighbourhood of Novorossiisk. On November 18 a sharp action which lasted for nine hours took place between the English and our troops at Shatt-el-Arab. The enemy's losses were considerable. English prisoners declared that the Commander-in-Chief of the English troops was among the wounded. One shot fired by our gunboat *Marmariss* hit an English gunboat and caused an explosion on board.

Constantinople.

K. V., Nov. 22, 1914

Headquarters report that according to information received after the action at Shatt-el-Arab the ascertained English losses amounted to 750 dead and 1000 wounded.

Constantinople, December 25.

K. V., Nov. 22, 1914

An official report from Headquarters says: After the action at Basra on November 19, which ended with heavy losses in killed and wounded on the English side,

the enemy received reinforcements and advanced slowly along the river under cover of the fire of his gunboats. Our troops awaited the enemy in a new position where his guns and his ships could not help him. The ship *Nilufer* has been sunk off Kilia as the result of an accident.

OCCUPATION OF BASRA

Times, Nov. 25 1914

The Secretary of State for India has received reports from General Barrett, in command of the forces operating at the head of the Persian Gulf, and Sir P. Cox, the Political Officer accompanying the troops, to the following effect :

On the morning of the 23rd November a ceremonial march was made by the troops through the streets of Basra to a central point at which the notables of the town were assembled, and the Union Jack was hoisted on the prominent buildings ; naval salutes were fired, the troops presented arms and gave three cheers for the King-Emperor ; a suitable proclamation [1] was issued, and received with acclamation by the inhabitants.

The remnants of the Turkish forces which were at Basra have evaporated, leaving their guns and rifles. Zobeir, which had been held by the Turks, has submitted.

All the Europeans at Basra have been found safe and well, and we have received fresh news of the safety of those who are at Bagdad.

It is estimated by British merchants at Basra that the

[1] [The following is an extract from this proclamation :—' The British Government has now occupied Basra, but though a state of war with the Ottoman Government still prevails, we have no enmity or ill-will against the populace, to whom we hope to prove good friends and protectors. No remnant of Turkish administration now remains in this region. In place thereof the British flag has been established under which you will enjoy the benefits of liberty and justice, both in regard to your religious and your secular affairs.

' I have given strict orders to my victorious troops that in the execution of the duties entrusted to them they are to deal with the populace generally with complete consideration and friendliness. It remains with yourselves to treat them in the same way.

' In conclusion, you are at full liberty to pursue your vocations as usual, and your business as before, and it is my confident hope that the commerce of Basra will resume its course and prosper even more than in the past.']

Turkish wounded brought in after the action of the 17th November numbered 2000. The Arab soldiery who were recently mobilised by the Turks were left behind when the latter fled from Basra, and many of them, before going to their homes, discarded their arms and uniforms and resumed their civil dress. It is reported that they are very dissatisfied with the manner in which they were treated by the Turks.

DESPATCHES REGARDING OPERATIONS IN THE PERSIAN GULF AND IN MESOPOTAMIA

Field Operations

[*Parl. Paper*, 1915, Cd. 8074]

No. 597.—The Governor-General in Council has much pleasure in directing the publication of the following letter from the Chief of the General Staff, dated June 8, 1915, submitting despatches from Lieutenant-General Sir A. A. Barrett, K.C.B., K.C.V.O., describing certain operations of Indian Expeditionary Force 'D' up to March 31, 1915. The Governor-General in Council concurs in the opinion of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief regarding the manner in which the operations were carried out and the conduct of the troops engaged. His Excellency in Council also shares the Commander-in-Chief's appreciation of the valuable assistance rendered by the Royal Navy and the Royal Indian Marine.

From the Chief of the General Staff to the Secretary to the Government of India, Army Department, No. 11854-1, *dated Simla, June* 18, 1915

I am directed by His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief in India to submit for the information of the Government of India the under-mentioned reports on the operations of Indian Expeditionary Force 'D,' up to 31st March 1915[1]:—

(i) Report by Lieutenant-General Sir A. A. Barrett, K.C.B., K.C.V.O., on the operations resulting in the capture of Qurnah, December 9, 1914:

[1] [Only reports covering operations in 1914 are printed here; later reports will be given in a subsequent volume.]

(ii) Report by Lieutenant-General Sir A. A. Barrett, K.C.B., K.C.V.O., on an engagement north of Qurnah on January 20, 1915:

(iii) Officers, warrant officers, and non-commissioned officers brought to notice by Lieutenant-General Sir A. A. Barrett, K.C.B., K.C.V.O., for good services rendered during the operations from November 1914 to March 31, 1915.

2. His Excellency considers that the operations in question were skilfully carried out, and that the conduct of the troops reflects credit on all ranks. He desires to commend to the favourable consideration of Government the officers, non-commissioned officers, and men whose services are brought to notice in the reports, and wishes to invite attention to the valuable assistance rendered by the Royal Navy and Royal Indian Marine.

3. His Excellency recommends that these reports be treated as despatches and published in the *Gazette of India*.

From Lieutenant-General Sir A. A. Barrett, K.C.B., K.C.V.O., Commanding Indian Expeditionary Force 'D,' to the Chief of the General Staff, Army Headquarters, Delhi. Headquarters, Basra, No. 174-G, dated December 29, 1914

I have the honour to submit, for the information of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, the accompanying reports by Major-General C. I. Fry, Lieutenant-Colonel G. S. Frazer, and Commander W. Nunn, R.N., on the operations which resulted in the capture of Qurnah, and the surrender of the Turkish garrison with its commander, the late Vali of Basra.

The force originally despatched from Basra on the evening of December 3 for this purpose consisted of two guns of the 82nd Battery Royal Field Artillery, one company of Norfolks, half company 3rd Sappers and Miners, the 104th Rifles, and the 110th Mahrattas under command of Colonel G. S. Frazer. Two of the transports containing these troops were armed with two field-guns each, to be placed at the

disposal of the Senior Naval Officer as soon as the landing of the troops had been completed.

Colonel Frazer's orders were to land at a spot, selected by Captain Hayes-Sadler, R.N., on the left bank of the river a few miles below Qurnah, and, acting in concert with the Naval force, to clear bank of the enemy up to and beyond Qurnah, after which he had a free hand to decide whether to cross the river and attack the village of Qurnah, or to hold on and await reinforcements.

It will be seen from Colonel Frazer's report that the clearing of the left bank was carried out most successfully.

The enemy on this bank, after being driven from his entrenchments and from the village of Muzaira'ah, fell back to the north, while our leading troops got engaged with those holding the village of Qurnah on the right bank. Owing to the thick groves of palm trees at this spot, intersected as usual by numerous creeks, touch was lost with the retreating Turks, who were thus enabled to cross the river unmolested higher up stream; while Colonel Frazer, being unable to cross the river under a heavy fire, withdrew for the night. It will be seen from the report of Captain Nunn, R.N., that although the naval guns and the field-guns on the transports were able to afford most efficient support during the first part of the action, the ships and armed launches, one of which was disabled, could not, owing to being exposed to heavy shell fire, go far enough up stream to bring an effective fire to bear upon the enemy holding this village.

I consider that Colonel Frazer accomplished all that could have been expected of him, having regard to the limited number of troops under his command. The Turks had been reinforced before the action commenced, and were in greater strength than was expected.

As soon as the transports containing wounded and prisoners returned to Basra, I ordered General Fry to take up reinforcements consisting of four more field-guns, the remaining three companies of the Norfolk Regiment, the 7th Rajputs, and a half battalion of the 120th Infantry.

His orders were to reconnoitre the ground thoroughly before renewing the engagement, and to let me know if he considered more troops would be required. He asked for a

Mountain Battery and some transport mules, which were despatched as quickly as possible.

The further course of the action is fully described in General Fry's report, and it only remains for me to express my high appreciation of the skilful manner in which they were carried out, and of the excellent behaviour of the troops engaged. I consider that the crossing of the river was a most creditable performance, and I trust that the gallant conduct of Lieutenant Campbell and the non-commissioned officers and men of the 3rd Sappers and Miners, who swam the river, will meet with due recognition.

I also wish to endorse General Fry's commendations of other officers and men who distinguished themselves during this engagement, although, as I have already mentioned in a previous report, I propose to defer bringing the names of individual officers to notice until the operations as a whole have been concluded. I much regret that the force has now lost the services of Captain Hayes-Sadler, R.N., and the officers and men of H.M.S. *Ocean*, who have now rejoined their ship and quitted the Gulf.

List of accompaniments to Despatch

I.—Report on the operations of General Fry's column on December 6, 7, 8, and 9, 1914.
Appendix 'A.'—Report on transport arrangements.
Appendix 'B.'—Order of battle for operations, December 7.
Appendix 'C.'—Detail of ordnance and prisoners taken at Qurnah on December 9.

II.—Report on the operations of Lieutenant-Colonel Frazer's column on December 4, 1914.
Appendix 'D.'—Report by Lieutenant-Colonel Clery, 104th Rifles, on operations December 4.
Appendix 'E.'—List of casualties December 4.

III.—Report by Commander W. Nunn, Senior Naval Officer, Persian Gulf Division, on the operations December 4 to 9, 1914.

Maps and Sketches:
- Sketch map of Camp Shaib.
- Sketch map of action of December 7.
- Sketch map of Muzaira'ah.
- Sketch of crossing of River Tigris.
- Sketch showing operations of December 4.
- Map of country round Qurnah, scale 4 inches to 1 inch.
- Sketches illustrating the Senior Naval Officer's Report (Part III.)

} Not reproduced.

ENCLOSURE No. 1

Report on the Operations of General Fry's Column on December 6, 7, and 8, 1914, culminating in the Surrender of Qurnah

The troops despatched from Basra on December 5 to reinforce Lieutenant-Colonel Frazer's Column (104th Rifles, 110th Mahratta Light Infantry and section 82nd Battery) arrived at Camp Shaib at 5 A.M. on December 6 and disembarked, extending the existing perimeter camp to the north. Colonel Frazer had arranged for a reconnaissance of the enemy's position by three companies under Major Hill at 8 A.M., and during this, I and one of my staff went on board H.M.S. *Lawrence* to confer with Sir P. Cox and Captain Hayes-Sadler, Senior Naval Officer.

The enemy had reoccupied Muzaira'ah after Colonel Frazer's operation of December 4, and appeared to be actively engaged in entrenching the position.

At 10.30 A.M. the enemy opened fire with two guns from the southern end of Muzaira'ah on Major Hill's reconnaissance, firing about six groups of two shots of well-timed shrapnel, and at 11 A.M. opened on the *Lawrence*, firing six groups of two shots. They appeared to be ranging new guns.

The reconnaissance returned to camp, while the *Lawrence* withdrew a short distance down stream.

At 2.30 P.M. the Senior Naval officer reported that about 500 enemy with two guns were advancing from Muzaira'ah

across the plain. The 110th were sent forward to reinforce the outposts with two sections 76th Battery, Royal Field Artillery. After some brief long-range fire the enemy retired, and beyond a small affair of outposts just before dusk, when the enemy advanced too close, necessitating the reinforcement of the outposts by one double company, there was no sniping or other disturbing element during the ensuing night.

From my intelligence it appeared that the enemy had been considerably reinforced since Colonel Frazer's action on 4th, and were now estimated at 1200 to 1500 about Muzaira'ah with six guns, and about 800 in Qurnah with four guns.

As any forward movement from Muzaira'ah would enable the enemy to shell the camp (though the danger was a night one only), and to prevent any further reinforcement, to the enemy, I decided that an early attack on Muzaira'ah, with the clearing of the left bank of the Tigris River, was essential to further operations. This, however, would have been ineffectual unless I was prepared to remain in possession of captured ground. The opening of a short line of communication to Shaib Camp would be essential, and consequently 320 mules were wired for, being the minimum estimated requirement. (For the working of this line *see* Appendix ' A.')

On December 7 the force (Appendix ' B '), less one half-double company per battalion and details of other units left in camp, assembled on the farther side of the creek just north of the camp at 9 A.M. Considerable delay occurred owing to difficulties experienced by the field artillery in crossing this shallow creek, filled by an exceptionally high tide.

My plan of attack was for the 2nd Norfolk Regiment and the 120th Infantry to attack the village of Muzaira'ah and the trenches south of that place, while the 110th Light Infantry, echeloned back on the right of the 2nd Norfolk Regiment, was to carry out a turning movement against the north of the village, the 7th Rajputs and 104th Rifles being held in reserve. The section 82nd Battery was directed to support the left attack, the two sections 76th Battery, Royal Field Artillery, the right attack. The Mountain Battery and transport mules asked for had arrived at camp, and I must here express my thanks for the prompt despatch

of these, the latter being specially necessary for my plans. The 30th Mountain Battery at once joined the force for the action, and was placed between the field batteries to support either flank as required.

Close co-operation had been arranged for with the Senior Naval Officer. (For the distribution of troops and subsequent movements, *see* Sketch Map of action of December 7.) [1]

The advance commenced at 11 A.M. over an absolutely level and bare open plain without a vestige of cover, and at 11.15 A.M. 82nd Battery opened fire on Muzaira'ah at a range of 2750 yards.

Ten minutes later the enemy opened rifle fire from the village and trenches covering it, and at 11.45 A.M. the 76th Battery, Royal Field Artillery, came into action at 3800 yards range. Two of the enemy's guns then opened fire on the 76th Battery from the north end of Muzaira'ah, the flashes being visible, but they were silenced in ten rounds and did not re-open fire, being subsequently captured intact.

The infantry were meanwhile steadily advancing, and all artillery advanced to closer ranges. As the infantry came into action each line successively dropped their blankets to facilitate movement and these were collected after the action.

The 2nd Norfolk Regiment and 120th Infantry came under some enfilade fire from trenches on the enemy's right, but the prompt switching of fire on to that flank by the 82nd Battery and guns from the ships, combined with vigorous action on the part of the 120th Infantry, reinforced by a double company 7th Rajputs with Maxim guns, effectually checked any danger from that direction.

Meanwhile the 110th Light Infantry executed their turning movement against trenches on the north of Muzaira'ah, till at 12.50 P.M., the whole of the 2nd Norfolk Regiment being now merged in the firing line, the village was stormed at the point of the bayonet, the enemy not waiting to receive the charge.

The pursuit through the palm groves was vigorously carried out by the 120th Infantry and 2nd Norfolk Regiment, while the 110th Light Infantry cleared the trenches immediately north of Muzaira'ah. The 104th Rifles followed closely after the 110th Light Infantry, and, as the latter

[1] Not reproduced.

regiment swung towards the river, moved northwards, clearing further trenches occupied by the enemy in their retirement. All the artillery moved round the north of Muzaira'ah and shelled the enemy.

At 2 P.M. two hostile guns opened fire from the north-north-east, the flashes only being visible. These were silenced in seven minutes by searching fire from 76th Battery at 4100 yards range, and teams were seen galloping away, leaving the guns. A squadron of cavalry or even a troop during this pursuit would have been invaluable, for the two guns could undoubtedly have been captured and probably a large body of the enemy (estimated from 1000 to 1500) could have been rounded up, with their line of retreat up the river bank cut.

Major Maule, 82nd Battery, had meanwhile placed one of his guns in position on the left bank of the Tigris at the northern edge of the palm groves and effectually raked the river front of Qurnah at a range of 2300 yards.

The 7th Rajputs, except for one double company reinforcement to the 120th, were in reserve throughout the action.

Through the palm groves the fighting continued till nearly dusk, the enemy bringing a heavy fire to bear from Qurnah and along the river bank.

Camp was arranged for the force in some gardens between Muzaira'ah and the palm groves, where, though within shell fire from Qurnah, it was hidden from view and covered by the glare of the burning village. By 5 P.M. all units were settling into camp except the 110th Light Infantry, who were covering the operation from the north-west and who came in after dark. About this time two enemy's shell were burst outside the north-west corner of camp, and at 9.30 P.M. five shells were fired over the glowing village: no damage was done, and the ensuing night was devoid of incident.

The captures this day included 3 field-guns, about 130 prisoners, and a large number of rifles, which were destroyed.

The enemy are estimated to have had about 2000 troops on the left bank, and subsequent information places their casualties at about 200 killed and 300 wounded, but the latter is probably underestimated. Our casualties were—British officers wounded, 5; Indian officers wounded, 3; rank and file killed, 8; wounded, 112, of whom 2 have since died.

I must acknowledge the admirable support extended by the Artillery and the Navy, which seems to have paralysed all artillery resistance.

From my intelligence this evening it appeared that about 1500 of the enemy escaped northwards up the left bank of the Tigris, and that the majority had embarked and fled north, while in Qurnah itself were some 800 regulars with 4 guns.

I decided to attempt a crossing of the Tigris without delay.

Early on the morning of December 8 the half company (No. 17) Sappers and Miners were despatched to the northern edge of the palm groves to get a line across the river. The 104th Rifles were to reconnoitre and cover the operations from the north; the 110th Light Infantry and 2nd Norfolk Regiment were moved to the edge of the palm groves, the former to cross and the latter to cover the crossing, while the artillery moved to positions in support, and the 120th Infantry and 7th Rajputs were to distract attention opposite Qurnah itself in combination with the naval force.

The dispositions of the crossing are shown in sketch of crossing of river Tigris.[1]

At 11.30 A.M. Havildar Ghulam Nabi swam across the Tigris with a log line accompanied by Lance-Naik Nur Dad and Sapper Ghulam Haidar, and, in spite of a strong current and the possibility of a heavy fire being brought on them at any moment, they succeeded in swimming the 130 yards of river and landing on the right bank. Lieutenant Campbell, R.E., then went across, and the 1½ inch wire cable, especially brought up for the purpose, was hauled over and made fast; a difficult feat in the strong current on an ebb tide.

A dhow was secured with the assistance of two or three friendly Arabs, and, being brought across, the first party of some 70 men, 110th Light Infantry, under Lieutenant-Colonel Frazer and Captain Cochran, General Staff Officer, 3rd grade for Intelligence, successfully landed on the right bank at 1.20 P.M. under some rifle fire from dhows down stream. Though the operation was tedious, the rest of the battalion was gradually pushed over.

Meanwhile the Navy and a double company of each of the 120th Infantry and 7th Rajputs were distracting the

[1] Not reproduced.

enemy's attention in front of Qurnah successfully; for the crossing did not appear to have been realised by the enemy till too late, though some rifle and ineffectual shell fire was experienced.

The 104th Rifles had earlier reported that they could cross about 1½ miles up stream by three dhows, the crews of which were friendly. They were directed to cross and come up on the right of the 110th Light Infantry for the advance on Qurnah, while the 2nd Norfolk Regiment detached half a battalion to replace them.

The single gun, 82nd Battery, only returned the enemy's fire, and it was not found necessary for the other guns to disclose themselves. One Section 30th Mountain Battery, without mules, followed the 110th Light Infantry across the river, but were not employed, as Lieutenant-Colonel Frazer, meeting with some opposition north of Qurnah, decided it was too late in the day to storm the town with the probability of street fighting.

The 104th Rifles, 110th Light Infantry, and Section 30th Mountain Battery accordingly went into camp on the right bank near the flying bridge. One double company 110th Light Infantry, under Lieutenant-Colonel Britten, however, moving down the right bank, did not get the order to retire, and, entering the enemy's position on their right, enfiladed their northern defence and occupied three towers in this part of their position. This double company, being isolated, later withdrew to camp without casualty for the night.

To support this force on the right bank, the 2nd Norfolk Regiment were left to camp at the end of the palm groves on the left bank, other units resuming their camp at Muzaira'ah.

The ensuing night was devoid of incident.

Our casualties this day were 23 rank and file wounded.

At 5 A.M. on December 9, as I was about to resume operations, I received intimation from the Senior Naval Officer that a deputation of officers from Subhi Bey, the late Vali of Basrah and Turkish Commander, had boarded H.M.S. *Espiègle* about midnight, stating that the Vali was prepared to surrender unconditionally.

I met a deputation, consisting of the Chief Staff Officer and two Lieutenants on board at 8.30 A.M., when arrangements for surrender were made and all movements of troops stopped.

At 1.30 P.M., accompanied by Sir Percy Cox, Captain Hayes-Sadler (Senior Naval Officer) and Staffs, I landed at the Vali's house and received his surrender, returning to him his sword in recognition of his able defence.

Meanwhile the 104th Rifles and 110th Light Infantry had moved into Qurnah, and piquets were posted round the town, the remainder of the battalions being drawn up round the Turkish force, which had fallen in with piled arms on the open square at the south corner of the town.

At 2.30 P.M. the Union Jack was formally hoisted, and the transference of the prisoners to the paddle steamer *Blosse Lynch* was proceeded with. The details of ordnance and prisoners taken at Qurnah are shown in Appendix ' C.'

General Remarks and Recommendations.—I cannot speak too highly of the conduct of the troops throughout these operations and their steadiness under heavy fire. Their tactical formations were admirably adapted to the ground, which afforded no cover, and the units were handled with marked ability.

My thanks are due to Captain Hayes-Sadler, R.N., for his very close co-operation with his naval force throughout these operations, which was of invaluable assistance.

The fact that there were so few casualties was due to the splendid co-operation of the Field and Mountain Artillery. Their fire was rendered very difficult owing to mirage, but in spite of this they maintained an accurate fire on the enemy's trenches right up to the moment of assault. They also immediately silenced any of the enemy's guns which opened fire. Major St. T. B. Nevinson, 76th Battery, Royal Field Artillery, acted as Commander Royal Artillery, and directed this co-operation with great skill and ability. Major St. J. Maule, 82nd Battery, Royal Field Artillery, throughout showed great initiative, and his action in bringing a gun to bear on the river front of Qurnah on December 7 and 8 had much to do with the decisive issues of the operations.

Major H. J. Cotter, 30th Mountain Battery, and Captain E. V. Sarson, 76th Battery, Royal Field Artillery, gave valuable services.

No. 98166 Battery Sergeant-Major H. E. Haggett, 76th Battery, Royal Field Artillery, is noted for exceptionally able and energetic assistance.

No. 17 Company, 3rd Sappers and Miners.—I cannot speak too highly of the services rendered by this half company throughout, under the command of Lieutenant R. C. Lord, R.E. They have had very hard work, and their devotion to it has been of incalculable assistance.

Major H. E. Winsloe, R.E., acted as my A.C.R.E., and ably directed the operation of bridging the river Tigris.

Havildar Ghulam Nabi, No. 2632, swam across the Tigris with a log line accompanied by Lance-Naik Nur Dad, No. 3742, and No. 3898 Sapper Ghulam Haidar. There was a strong current in the river, which was about 130 yards wide, and the enemy were occupying the opposite bank only a short distance down stream. Although they were not fired on, there was every reason to expect they would be, as the ground on the opposite bank was densely wooded and favoured the approach of an enemy. It was owing to their gallant action that the steel cable was got across and the flying bridge constructed. I recommend Havildar Ghulam Nabi for the ' Order of Merit ' and Lance-Naik Nur Dud and Sapper Ghulam Haidar for the ' Distinguished Conduct Medal.'

Lieutenant M. G. G. Campbell, R.E., deserves special recognition for his gallant crossing over the Tigris, holding on to the log line only, when a strong current was running, to superintend the hauling over the steel hawser and fix the running tackle for the flying bridge—he was for some time under fire while performing this difficult operation.

2nd Battalion Norfolk Regiment.—This fine Regiment has throughout been an example to others, both in the field and in camp. Their cohesion and the precision in their movements showed that they have attained a very high standard of efficiency in their peace training, the credit for which is due to Lieutenant-Colonel E. C. Peebles, D.S.O., who has commanded the Regiment with marked ability and energy.

Captain W. J. O'B. Daunt (severely wounded) proved himself a gallant leader.

Captain and Adjutant G. de Grey was particularly conspicuous in taking messages to the firing line, and conveying ammunition to it when it was running short.

Lieutenant H. S. Farebrother for bold handling of his machine-gun section over absolutely open ground.

No. 5008 Sergeant W. Bailey (twice wounded) for work with machine-guns.

No. 5223 Lance-Sergeant L. Snell
No. 5973 Sergeant A. Cornwall
No. 7226 Lance-Sergeant Leveridge
No. 7345 Corporal W. Fristin
No. 7545 Musician Mullinger
No. 7784 Musician Sharpe
No. 8049 Private A. Dawson
} for exceptionally gallant and useful work during the attack on Muzaira'ah.

No. 8365 Private F. Pryor
No. 8632 Private A. George
} did particularly well, attending to Captain Daunt when wounded.

Captain D. Arthur, I.M.S., was particularly conspicuous in attending Captain Daunt and other wounded when exposed to heavy fire, and throughout the action.

7th Rajputs.—This Regiment was held in reserve throughout, but one double company under Lieutenant-Colonel Parr did well when it reinforced the 120th Infantry.

Lieutenant W. L. Harvey.—For the very efficient manner in which he brought up his machine-gun section in support of the 120th Infantry; he was wounded just after adjusting a jam in one of his guns.

Subadar Brijmohan Singh handled his company in a very efficient manner when brought up in support of the 120th Infantry, and acted throughout with conspicuous bravery and coolness.

104th Rifles.—This Regiment has been engaged in every action which has taken place during this campaign, and has met with very heavy casualties. Their work under my command during these operations has throughout been excellent and quite up to the fine traditions of the Regiment. During the action of the 7th they were in reserve, but were thrown in towards the end of the action and carried out the pursuit well. On the 8th Lieutenant-Colonel C. B. Clery showed great initiative in securing the three dhows up stream, and his action greatly facilitated the rapidity of crossing.

Captain H. M. Butler (severely wounded) for exceptional skill and gallant leading of his double company in the attack on Muzaira'ah.

Sub-Assistant Surgeon Pundit, I.S.M.D.—During the attack on Muzaira'ah on December 7, 1914, Rifleman Ghos

Mahammad was shot by an Arab, who was hiding in one of the huts. Sub-Assistant Surgeon Pundit called on a sepoy of another regiment to enter the hut and clear it. The sepoy seemed reluctant to do so, and this Sub-Assistant Surgeon took his rifle and bayonet, entered the house, and closed with the Arab. The sepoy followed, and between them they killed him. He has also shown exceptional bravery in attending wounded under fire.

110th Mahratta Light Infantry.—This Regiment carried out the turning movement on the enemy's left flank on the 7th with great intelligence and dash, and worked well on the 8th.

Lieutenant-Colonel T. X. Britten.—His action on December 8, 1914, in capturing three towers on the right of the enemy's position at Qurnah shows him to be a resourceful and dashing leader.

Captain K. E. Cooper showed great dash and bravery attacking through the north end of Muzaira'ah. He approached one small house from which fire was being kept up, climbed a wall at the back and shot four Turks, who were occupying it, with his revolver.

Subadar Hari Savant and Jemadar Vishun Ghone for conspicuous coolness and ability in handling their half double companies on December 7 and 8, 1914.

No. 2089 Lance-Naik Bhan Sawant (since killed), a young soldier who showed much dash and spirit in command of the scouts of his company.

No. 1148 Lance-Naik Haider Beg, a signaller, who on two occasions signalled an important message from the firing line to the artillery, standing up fearlessly in the open under heavy fire, doing so, as he could not see properly in any other position.

120th Rajputana Infantry.—This Regiment, consisting of only Headquarters and 2 double companies, acted with great boldness and spirit on our left flank, and ably supported the 2nd Norfolk Regiment when the latter came under enfilade fire from the enemy's right.

Lieutenant and Adjutant W. L. Miskin showed great dash and capacity. After Captain Macready was wounded he took command of that officer's double company and handled it well, having twice to change direction to meet enfilade fire, and on each occasion succeeded in turning out the enemy.

Subadar Dunga Rawat for conspicuous bravery and coolness in handling his half double company.

No. 978 Havildar Gunesh for marked capacity as a leader.

Medical Services.—The Field Ambulances under Major E. Bennett, R.A.M.C., worked with great devotion on the 7th, and were under shell fire for a short time that night.

Transport.—I must recognise the good work done by the portion of the 10th Mule Corps under Jemadar Allah Din, and endorse the recommendations to notice of individuals mentioned in paragraph 12 of Appendix ' A.'

Headquarters.—Finally, I would bring forward the names of Captain E. G. Dunn, Royal Irish Rifles, my Brigade Major, who again gave most valuable and energetic assistance in the working out of the details of the operations. His clear conveyance of my orders materially assisted in the successful issue of the operations. Also Captain W. F. C. Gilchrist, 52nd Sikhs (F. F.), my Staff Captain, who again proved himself an able, energetic, and resourceful Staff Officer; he, in the absence of either a Supply or Transport Officer, organised and maintained an unfailing supply to the troops from my original camp at Shaib.

Captain H. G. Morrell, 119th Infantry, in command of the 18th Brigade Section of the 34th Divisional Signal Company, carried out his duties under difficult circumstances very ably and with untiring energy.

Captain G. W. Cochran, 81st Pioneers, General Staff Officer, 3rd Grade for Intelligence, worked unsparingly and the information he collected turned out to be very accurate. He also gave me much assistance in other ways.

Appendix A

Report on the Working of the Transport between Shaib Camp and Muzaira'ah

1. On arrival at Shaib on the morning of December 5, 1914, General Fry decided to get up three hundred mules, his intention being, when the village of Muzaira'ah was captured and the troops reached the left bank of the Tigris, to maintain himself there and attempt to cross above Qurnah.

2. A demand for 320 mules was therefore sent to Basra at 1 P.M. on December 5.

3. These mules (320) arrived on the morning of the 7th at 7 A.M. They were disembarked by 9 A.M.

4. I ordered them to feed and saddle up at 12 noon. Captain Lanyon, of the Norfolk Regiment, was put in charge of the mules to distribute them. I gave him a distribution list showing how mules were to be allotted.

5. At 1 P.M. orders were telephoned to camp to load up the mules as it was seen that Muzaira'ah would soon be in our possession.

6. About 4.30 P.M. the mules began to arrive in Camp Muzaira'ah. As it was getting dark and spasmodic firing was going on, the confusion was considerable.

All the mules were unloaded, however, and in the dark assembled by the duffadars and taken back to camp.

This evening the Regiments got each :

16 loads rations,
8 loads ammunition,
8 loads tools,
8 loads cooking pots,
some kits,

and so were amply provided for.

7. The orders for the 8th, 9th, and 10th were to send up one day's rations each day.

8. As it was feared that the horses might not be able to get full forage rations on 8th, 190 loads of forage were sent for and arrived after dark on 8th.

With them came 48 mules for duty in Muzaira'ah as 1st line mules in case of a further advance across the river. The mules this day therefore did a double trip.

9. There being ample forage in camp, the mules on 9th and 10th only brought up men's rations from Shaib, while 48 mules assisted in carrying up kits of units as they were sent across the Tigris.

10. Eventually all the mules were taken to the right bank of Tigris on the 12th, having been used to ration the troops left on the left bank and to bring up the remains of kits left in camp.

11. On the 8th, when two units were passed over to the right bank, all available mules and the 30th Mountain Battery

baggage were used to send up their kits, so that by the evening the troops across the river were rationed and had their blankets that night.

12. Captain Lanyon speaks very highly of the work done by Jemadar Allah Din, who commanded the mules. His work was of the greatest help.

The Kote Duffadars :

2193 Busaki Ram,
6417 Jamal Din,
205 Mir Dad,

were of the greatest help to me in collecting their mules in the dark and in constantly moving backwards and forwards.

The men, of whom I saw a certain amount, were cheery and worked well, and though they were under spasmodic shell fire on 7th and 8th and had to cross the plain where bullets, though spent, were falling, behaved very well indeed.

Appendix B

Order of Battle

Major-General C. I. Fry's Column on December 7, 1914

Commanding, Major-General C. I. Fry, Indian Army.
Staff :

Brigade Major, Captain E. G. Dunn, Royal Irish Rifles.
Staff Captain, Captain W. F. C. Gilchrist, 52nd Sikhs.

Attached :

G.S.O., 3rd grade (Intelligence), Captain G. W. Cochran, 81st Pioneers.
A.C.R.E., Major H. E. Winsloe, R.E.
O. C. Brigade Section, 34th Divisional Signal Company, Captain H. G. Morrell, 119th Infantry.

Troops

Artillery :

76th Battery R.F.A. (less 1 Section), Major St. T. B. Nevinson.
82nd Battery R.F.A., one section on each of *Medijieh* and *Blosse Lynch*, Major H. St. J. Maule.
30th Indian Mountain Battery, Major H. J. Cotter.

Engineers :

17th Company 3rd Sappers and Miners (less 2 Sections), Lieutenant R. C. Lord.

Infantry :

18th Brigade :

2nd Battalion Norfolk Regiment, Lieutenant-Colonel E. C. Peebles, D.S.O.

7th D.C.O. Rajputs (less 1 D.C.), Lieutenant-Colonel N. E. Robin.

120th Rajputana Infantry (less 2 D.C.), Lieutenant-Colonel E. Codrington.

110th Mahratta Light Infantry, Lieutenant-Colonel G. S. Frazer.

104th Rifles, Lieutenant-Colonel C. B. Clery.

Approximate Strength.						Naval Force.
Unit.	B. O.	I. O.	Br. R. & F.	Ind. R. & F.	Guns.	H.M. Ships :— *Espiègle, Odin, Lawrence.* H.M. Gunboats :— *Miner, Lewis Pelly, Shaitan.* s.s. *Medijieh, Blosse Lynch.* 2 guns on s.s. *Medijieh.* 2 guns on *Blosse Lynch.*
76th Battery Royal Field Artillery,	4	—	60	—	4 18-pr.	
82nd Battery Royal Field Artillery,	5	—	62	—	6	
30th Mountain Battery,	5	3	—	277	6 10-pr.	
17th Company Sappers and Miners,	3	1	—	75	—	
2nd Norfolk Regiment,	23	—	845	—	2 m.g.	
7th Rajputs,	10	13	—	479	2 m.g.	
110th Mahratta Light Infantry,	10	17	—	675	1 m.g.	
120th Infantry,	9	10	—	404	2 m.g.	
104th Rifles,	12	16	—	670	2 m.g.	
Brigade Signal Section,	1	—	11	18	—	
Staff and Attached,	5	—	3	—	—	
Total,	87	60	981	2598	10 18-pr. 6 10-pr. 9 m.g.	

N.B.—One ½ D.C. each unit (120th details only) and details from other units were left in Camp Shaib as guard out of these numbers.

Appendix C

Detail of Ordnance and Prisoners taken at Qurnah on December 9, 1914

Ordnance :

2 Krupp Field-guns.
12 Mountain guns.
.303 Maxim-gun (recovered after its loss December 4, 1914).
22 Officers' swords.
776 Rifles (of which some 250 were handed over to Navy at their request).

N.B.—Large quantities of ammunition were destroyed.

Prisoners of War

Subhi Bey, late Vali of Basra and Turkish Commander.

	Officers.	Rank and File.
1st Battalion 26th Regiment (Anatolia)	12	353
2nd Battalion Murrattab Regiment (Bagdad) (Amara)	13	345
1st Company 1st Battalion 28th Regiment Artillery	2	63
Turkish Navy	1	3
Basra Battalion Gendarmerie . .	7	177
Medical	4	11
Supply, etc.	3	11
Vali's Staff	1	5
Wounded in hospital	2	21
Total . .	45	989

Enclosure No. 2

Copy of Report by Lieutenant-Colonel G. S. Frazer, 110th Mahratta Light Infantry, Commanding Qurnah Column, on the operations of December 4, 1914, dated Camp Um Rash, December 5, 1914

I have the honour to report as follows on the operations yesterday :

1. My Staff Officer, Captain Branson, who was wounded, has already taken to you most of the details, and I sent you a wireless in code last night.

2. The disembarkation yesterday morning was carried out quickly and without confusion.

Two small creeks delayed the advance of the column till they could be rendered passable.

My Advanced Guard was, in the first instance, directed so as to pass well to the east of Muzaira'ah.

As all the scouting had to be done with Infantry, the advance was not very quick.

It was first reported that there was no enemy in Muzaira'ah, and I then changed the direction of the Advanced Guard so that their right passed to the east of Muzaira'ah.

It was then discovered beyond a doubt that the enemy were in position along the edge of the date palms between Muzaira'ah and Qurnah.

I directed the Advanced Guard to clear the village and brought up the other half Battalion of the 110th on their left, and attacked the enemy on their left flank.

It then became known that Muzaira'ah was occupied by the enemy.

I sent the Norfolks, 1 D.C., to support the half Battalion 110th attacking the village.

Eventually the Sappers and Miners also joined the right attack.

The village was cleared and also the trenches in front of the date trees, where the 110th captured 69 prisoners and 2 abandoned field-guns (9-prs.).

In the meantime, the ships had been shelling Qurnah and the date groves, and the Royal Field Artillery Muzaira'ah, and the practice of all guns seemed to be excellent.

The troops after this did not come under shell fire, but the rifle fire opposed to them was considerable.

When the troops entered the date grove I reinforced the left half of the 110th by half the Battalion of 104th, and the enemy was driven back to the Tigris River, where they quickly effected a crossing by means of boats arranged as flying bridges.

At 2.10 P.M. I ordered a retirement to the place near where we disembarked, and there formed camp.

After my Infantry entered the date grove my Field Artillery was unable to render any further assistance.

The Tigris east of Qurnah is from 200 to 300 yards wide, and field-guns cannot operate against Qurnah owing to the date trees.

My retirement to camp was well and steadily carried out.

I am of opinion that until guns can be brought up to demolish the houses of Qurnah, the only way to effect a landing would be to do so with country boats north of Qurnah.

All the troops under my command performed their duty most thoroughly.

Captain Branson, 110th Mahratta Light Infantry, my Staff Officer, afforded me the greatest assistance, and was wounded shortly after I had decided to retire, while I was issuing the orders.

I attach a report from Officer Commanding 104th.

The Officer Commanding 110th reports as follows :

> 'Of the officers who came under my observation I should like to particularly mention Major Hill and Lieutenant Hind in the Company firing line, and Lieutenant Ball who handled the machine-guns most efficiently.'

No. 959 Lance-Naik Apa Bagive displayed great bravery during the attack on the enemy's position in the date groves, and in the subsequent advance towards Qurnah. He was carrying the flag on the left of the line in order to indicate the position of the line to the warships. The flag was a very conspicuous mark, and drew a heavy fire from the enemy. Lance-Naik Apa Bagive carried the flag absolutely in the open. Had he taken cover, the flag might not have been visible.

I am sending down all prisoners on *Blosse Lynch*, *Malomir*, and *Medijieh* under command of Captain Bayley, Royal Field Artillery.

Appendix D

Report by Lieutenant-Colonel C. Clery, Commanding 104th Rifles, to the Staff Officer, Qurnah Column, dated December 5, 1914

As requested, I have the honour to forward the names of the following officers and men of the regiment under my

command, who were conspicuous for their gallant conduct during the action of the 4th instant opposite Qurnah :

Captain E. G. J. Byrne.—This officer in the face of a heavy and accurate fire brought his machine-guns right up to the firing line on the river bank opposite Qurnah. From here his fire was so galling to the Turks that they brought up a field-gun and endeavoured to silence the machine-guns. Several of the shells hit the parapet where the machine-guns were ; notwithstanding this, Captain Byrne kept his guns in action, and did not retire from his position until ordered to retire. This officer, on two previous occasions on which the Regiment has been in action, has brought his detachments forward most intelligently and gallantly. On this occasion he received one bullet through his helmet and one cut his puttee.

2. Subadar Ghulam Rasul.—This Indian officer was conspicuous for the gallant manner in which he led his men forward in the face of a heavy accurate and short range fire from the Turks.

This officer was subsequently killed.

3. Jemadar Kishna Ram. Conspicuous pluck under fire, and assisted a wounded man to rear under heavy fire during the retirement.

4. No. 2317 Lance-Naik Guman Singh.

5. No. 2866 Rm. Khota Ram.

6. No. 2578 Rm. Dhanna Ram.

7. No. 2090 Rm. Maula Dad.

8. When ordered to retire, the two machine-guns had to be carried by hand some 250 yards back to the mules under heavy fire. Not having enough men to take away all the ammunition boxes as well as guns, the machine-gun officer asked four men to return to the position and recover the ammunition boxes. They did so under a heavy gun and rifle fire and brought back all the boxes to the mules, although the troops had left the trench.

9. No. 2435 Havildar Mohru Ram, when left in command of a long mixed firing line, performed meritorious service in controlling this line and opening very heavy, accurate fire on the Qurnah position, thus keeping the enemy's fire down while other parts of the firing line retired.

10. No. 1615 Reservist Jhonta Singh, ' B ' Coy.—Meri-

torious conduct during the retirement from the river, in carrying Rm. Jai Singh, who was severely wounded through the chest, on his shoulders for 600 yards under heavy fire, over a number of water nullahs, finally handing him over to some dhoolie bearers.

Reservist Jhonta Singh was previously recommended by his Double Company Commander for good work during the action of November 15, when he carried ammunition forward to the firing line from mules that had fallen into a canal.

11. No. 2263 Bugler Narsu Singh, 'A' Coy.—For meritorious conduct in taking written orders regarding the retirement under a heavy fire along the firing line on two occasions —once to extreme right and again later on to the machine-guns on the left.

12. No. 3241 Rm. Sobh Singh, 'A' Coy., and No. 2981 Rm. Kan Singh, 'A' Coy.—For meritorious conduct in carrying between them Rm. Jat Singh, 'A,' who was severely wounded in the head, under a heavy fire during the retirement for some 300 yards to the dhoolie.

14. No. 3195 Rm. Ratna Ram.

15. No. 2112 Rm. Dunga Ram.

16. No. 2670 Rm. Kheta Ram.

17. No. 3143 Rm. Koema Ram.

18. No. 2422 Rm. Jowana Ram.

The above men for meritorious conduct, who, in the absence of Indian officers and non-commissioned officers, were conspicuous in taking the place of non-commissioned officers in leading their commands forward under a heavy and accurate fire.

19. No. 2463 Bugler Kala Khan, for meritorious conduct. On November 15 this man with another during retirement from Saihan carried Captain Maclean out of action. On November 17 and December 4 he again performed meritorious work in carrying messages backwards and forwards from the Officer Commanding to the officers in the firing line.

Appendix E

Casualties on December 4

Units.	Killed.	Wounded.	Missing.
2nd Norfolks	—	3	—
3rd Sappers and Miners	—	2	2
110th Mahratta Light Infantry	5	16	3
104th Rifles	1 I. O. 13	28	2 W. M. 8 M.
No casualties, Royal Field Artillery			
2 mules killed			
2 mules wounded			
1 machine-gun missing, 110th			

1 B. O. wounded; 1 I. O. killed.
Indians—18 killed.
British—3 wounded.
Indians—46 wounded.
Indians—15 missing.
Enemy reported in Qurnah, 600 and 4 guns; outside, 700 and 2 guns.
Captured:
Gunner officer.
Infantry Captain, 2nd in command.
Another officer.
75 prisoners.
1 gun captured.
1 gun destroyed.

[Enclosure No. 3 from Commander W. Nunn, Senior Naval Officer, Persian Gulf Division, to the General Officer Commanding 18th Brigade, dated H.M.S. *Espiègle*, Qurnah, 15th December 1914, is here omitted. It will be found in *Naval*, 2, pp. 384-8.]

From the General Officer Commanding 18th Brigade, to the General Staff, Indian Expeditionary Force 'D,' dated Qurnah, December 15, 1914

Forwarded. In my report on these operations I have already mentioned the great assistance and co-operation

extended by the Naval Force under Captain Hayes-Sadler, R.N. I much admired the intrepidity shown by the Commanders of the armed launches in ascending the Shatt-el-Arab River under shell fire each day, and sincerely regret the death of one of these, Lieutenant Elkes, R.N.

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORTS CONNECTED WITH FOREGOING OPERATIONS

Times, Dec. 10, 1914.

The Secretary of State for India communicates the following regarding the progress of the Indian Expeditionary Force to the Persian Gulf :—

A reconnaissance of the enemy's position at Kurna was made on the 5th instant by Lieutenant-Colonel Frazer with the 110th Mahrattas. The enemy were encountered on the left bank of the Tigris opposite Kurna. They were promptly attacked and driven across the river, losing heavily ; two guns and 70 prisoners, including three Turkish officers, were captured. Kurna was found to be strongly held by guns and infantry, and, our troops having no means of crossing the Tigris, withdrew to their original bivouac four miles south of Kurna. Great assistance was given by the Navy from armed steamers which accompanied the reconnaissance. Our casualties were one British officer and three British rank and file wounded, one Indian officer and 19 rank and file killed, and about 60 wounded. Steamers *Miner* and *Lawrence* were hit by shells.

On the following day reinforcements were sent from Basra, under Brigadier-General Fry, by steamers and flats. On his arrival he reported the Turks in occupation of Masera, on the left bank of the Tigris immediately opposite Kurna. They attacked his outposts, but were repulsed with some loss. On the 7th instant General Fry captured Masera and cleared the left bank of the Tigris, bivouacking on the captured position. In this affair three guns were taken and two disabled, as well as 100 prisoners, including three officers.

On the 8th the 104th Rifles and 110th Mahrattas and two mountain guns crossed the Tigris by a flying bridge and dhows, and occupied the northern approaches of Kurna, and on the early morning of yesterday (9th December) Subhi Bey,

the late Governor of Basra and commanding the Turkish forces at Kurna, surrendered unconditionally with his troops. The town of Kurna was subsequently occupied. Our casualties during the whole of these operations amounted to one British officer killed and three wounded, about forty Indian rank and file killed, and 120 wounded.

This smart little affair has given us complete control of the country from the junction of the Tigris and Euphrates to the sea, and the richest of the fertile delta.

The Secretary of State for India communicates that on the capture of Kurna (on the Tigris), reported yesterday, 1100 prisoners, exclusive of wounded, and nine guns fell into our hands. The late Vali of Basra only surrendered after a plucky resistance.—*Press Bureau.* *Times*, Dec. 11 1914.

RED SEA FORT CAPTURED

The Secretary of the Admiralty makes the following announcement :— *Times*, Nov. 16 1914.

Successful operations against the Turkish garrison at Sheik Seyd have been carried out by Indian troops, assisted by His Majesty's ship *Duke of Edinburgh.*

The Turkish fort (Turba) is situated on the rocky heights to the eastward of Cape Bab-el-Mandeb, at the southern entrance to the Red Sea, and is close to the boundary line between Turkish territory and the Aden Protectorate.

The Sheik Seyd Peninsula consists of a group of rocky heights joined to the mainland by a low sandy plain, the greater portion of which is covered at high water by a shallow lagoon. The guns of the fort command the isthmus connecting the peninsula to the mainland.

Three battalions of troops were landed in face of opposition, but under cover of fire from His Majesty's ship *Duke of Edinburgh*, which had previously disabled Turba Fort, and which assisted during the operations.

After landing, one and a half battalions of infantry attacked the enemy positions, and were opposed by well-concealed artillery and infantry fire. When the hills com-

manding Manheli were occupied, opposition weakened, and about 200 of the enemy escaped by the isthmus on camels or in boats by sea. Six of the enemy were reported killed, and the majority of the remainer wounded and prisoners. The forts were occupied by us, and large amounts of munitions of war and six field-guns captured. Heavy guns were probably put out of action by *Duke of Edinburgh*.

Our casualties amongst the troops : One officer and fifteen men wounded ; four men killed. No naval casualties.

WAR IN THE FAR EAST

GERMANY'S REPLY TO THE JAPANESE ULTIMATUM

Berlin, August 24.

The following verbal reply to the Japanese ultimatum was given yesterday morning to the Japanese Chargé d'Affaires: The German Government does not intend to make any reply to the Japanese requests. She proposes to recall her Ambassador from Tokyo, and to hand the Japanese Chargé d'Affaires in Berlin his passports. *K. D.*

Berlin, August 25.

The Austro-Hungarian Ambassador informed the Ministry for Foreign Affairs that, in accordance with the Emperor's orders, the commander of R.M.S. *Kaiserin Elisabeth* in Tsingtau, and the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador in Tokyo have been informed by telegraph that this ship is to take the German side in any hostilities. *K. D.*

OPERATIONS AT KIAO-CHAU

Tokyo, September 15.

The Ministry of War announces that Japanese cavalry captured Tsimo, ten miles outside the Kiao-chau zone, on the 12th instant. There was no trace of the enemy north of the River Pi-sha, but their aeroplanes were occasionally sighted. From other telegrams it would appear that the first encounter between the Japanese and German land forces took place on Sunday [September 13] near Tsimo, where there were a number of sharp skirmishes between patrols. A German aeroplane flew over the district, and was fired upon by the Japanese, but without success.—*Reuter*. *Times*, Sept. 16 1914

Tokyo, September 16.

It is officially announced that Japanese scouts captured the railway station at Kiao-chau on the 13th inst.

A Japanese aeroplane dropped bombs on the barracks at Tsingtau, returning to safety.

A Japanese destroyer flotilla operating in Laoshan Bay has driven in the enemy's patrols.—*Reuter.*

Tokyo, September 20.

The landing of the Japanese at Laoshan Bay is officially announced. The Japanese attacked the Germans on Thursday [September 17] at Wangkohuang, thirteen miles east of Tsimo. The enemy were in a fortified position, and used machine-guns in their defence, but by sunset they abandoned their position, leaving supplies, equipment, and personal apparel.—*Reuter.*

Tokyo, September 24.

It is officially announced that a British force, under Brigadier-General Barnardiston, commanding the British forces in North China (including Wei-hai-wei), landed yesterday in the neighbourhood of Laoshan Bay, so as to participate in the movements against the Germans at Tsingtau.—*Reuter.*

(*Press Bureau Statement communicated by Japanese Military Attaché*)

September 28.

On the afternoon of the 26th our troops attacked the enemy, who were in occupation of advanced positions on the high ground between the Rivers Pai-sha and Li-tsun; after a slight engagement the enemy were put to flight.

On the 27th our troops occupied the line along the right banks of the Li-tsun and Chang-tsun Rivers, about seven miles north-east of Tsingtau.

September 29.

It is officially announced that at dawn, on the 28th inst., the Allied Forces operating against Tsingtau began an attack on the advanced positions distant about 4 kilometres ($2\frac{1}{2}$ miles) from the enemy's main line of defence. In spite of a fierce fire from the enemy from both sea and land, the Allies,

by noon on the 28th inst., had driven the enemy from his positions, and had occupied all the high ground overlooking the enemy's main line of defence.

Tokyo, September 29.

It is officially announced that the Japanese, in a day and night attack last Sunday, drove the Germans towards Tsingtau. The Japanese casualties were 150. The German losses are not known, but 50 Germans and four machine-guns were captured. *Times*, Sept. 30 1914

The action developed more speedily than was anticipated, and in view of its success the general attack is likely to be delivered at an earlier date than was at first thought possible.

The German gunboat *Iltis*, which was rendering effective assistance to the German land forces, was attacked by the Japanese Fleet.

The Japanese Fleet bombarded two Tsingtau forts yesterday. A British warship took part in the bombardment. One fort replied, but its fire was ineffective. The results of the bombardment are not known, but buildings were demolished, and it is believed that the barracks and defence works were damaged.

The work of mine-sweeping continues with success, despite the fire of the defenders ashore. One boat engaged in the work was hit, and two men were wounded.—*Reuter.*

Tokyo, September 30.

It is officially announced that a portion of the Japanese Fleet has landed a force which has occupied Laoshan Harbour, in the vicinity of Tsingtau. *Times*, Oct. 1, 1914

The Japanese captured four field-guns which had been abandoned by the Germans, and afterwards held the place with a small force.

The pilots of two Japanese biplanes and of one monoplane report that they have dropped bombs on German vessels from a height of 700 metres.

Although the wings of the machines were riddled with bullets and the stem of one was broken, all returned safely.—*Reuter.*

Tokyo, October 3.

An official report says: A German aeroplane at Tsingtau twice attempted to attack the Japanese vessels, but without result. A Japanese aeroplane pursuing it attacked with bombs a captive balloon just being hauled back to Tsingtau. It is not known what damage was inflicted.

The German forts and ships are constantly shelling the Japanese Army, which is slowly preparing for a big assault on Tsingtau.

Tokyo, October 5.

An official *communiqué* says: German forces to the number of 350 at Tsingtau delivered a night attack, but were defeated with a loss of 47 men killed. The Japanese casualties amounted to five killed and eight injured.

The Japanese heavy guns hit the gunboat *Iltis*, which retired after an exchange of shots.

Berlin, October 6.

It is reported from Rotterdam that in their first assault on the lines held by our troops at Tsingtau the Japanese and English allies were repulsed with a loss of 2500 men. The effect of the German mines, artillery, and machine-guns was annihilating. The right wing of the Allies was heavily bombarded by the Austro-Hungarian cruiser *Kaiserin Elisabeth* and the German gunboat *Jaguar*. The German losses are reported to be slight. The Japanese are awaiting reinforcements from Japan.

Tokyo, October 7.

It is officially announced that the Japanese arrived at Tsinanfu yesterday, and took over the control of engines and cars on the Shantung line. The Germans have destroyed several collieries.—*Reuter.*

Tokyo, October 8.

An official message states that the German fire at Tsingtau is slackening.

During the fighting the rope which held a German captive balloon was severed, and the balloon floated away.—*Reuter.*

The Japanese Commander of the besieging troops and the Japanese Commander of the blockading squadron conjointly communicated to the Governor of Tsingtau at 1 P.M. on October 12, by means of wireless telegraphy, an Imperial Message desiring to succour non-combatants and individuals of neutral Powers in Tsingtau. *P. B.*, Oct. 14.

The Governor expressed his wish to agree with this, and at 10 A.M. on October 13 *parlementaires* from each side met to discuss details; as a result of this conference it has been settled to escort to Tientsin on the 15th instant the American Consul and a certain number of Chinese subjects, and German women and children.

Tokyo, October 16.

An official statement says that in the forenoon of the 14th instant, a section of the naval squadron outside Tsingtau destroyed portions of the Iltis and Kaiser forts, while simultaneously aeroplanes dropped bombs. During the attack one British bluejacket was killed, and two were wounded. The Japanese suffered no loss.—*Reuter.* *Times*, Oct. 17, 1914

The War Office makes the following announcement:

'His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince of Japan has, through an aide-de-camp, delivered a most gracious message to the British troops operating with the Japanese forces before Tsingtau, and has presented them with a gift of refined saké (rice-wine). *Times*, Oct. 21, 1914

Tientsin, October 24.

It is officially announced that the Japanese naval heavy artillery is co-operating with the land forces in the bombardment of Tsingtau.—*Exchange Telegraph Company.* *Times*, Oct. 26, 1914

It is officially announced that an Indian contingent has joined the Anglo-Japanese forces before Tsingtau. *Times*, Oct. 31, 1914

November 1.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has received the following cablegram from the British Ambassador in Japan: *P. B.*

The Japanese War Department announces that the general bombardment of Tsingtau began at dawn to-day (October 31).

Tokyo.

T. V.
Nov. 4,
1914

It is officially announced that the bombardment of Tsingtau continues. Most of the German forts have been silenced. Only two of them reply without intermission to the attacks of the Allies by sea and land. The bombardment caused an outbreak of fire near the harbour and the explosion of an oil tank. The fort Siaochausan is in flames. A German gunboat which lost its funnel is no longer to be seen.

Tokyo, November 5.

Times,
Nov. 6,
1914

The following official announcement has been issued here :

The bombardment of Tsingtau is being vigorously continued.

On the night of November 3 the Germans made a counter-attack in order to hinder our operations.

The power house has been destroyed. The attacking forces are gradually closing in, and our shells are now falling in the streets.

Tokyo, November 6.

Times,
Nov. 7,
1914

An official casualty list issued here states that the British have so far had two killed and eight wounded, including two majors. The Japanese have had 200 killed, and 878 wounded. The bombardment of Tsingtau continues. Aeroplanes are dropping bombs and circulars, warning the inhabitants not to participate in the military operations.—*Reuter.*

Tokyo, November 7.

It is officially announced that Tsingtau has surrendered.

The Germans hoisted the white flag at seven o'clock in the morning on the Observatory. Two companies of infantry with a squad of sappers captured the central fort of the main line of defence at midnight, and took 200 prisoners. The charge was led by General Yoshimi Yamada.

The Germans made desperate efforts to repair the damage done to their batteries, but the Japanese shells killed the men at work and demolished the batteries anew. It is thought that the capitulation of the port was hastened by stopping the smuggling of provisions from the Ling Chan coast.

The Vice-Minister of the Navy, Baron Suzuki, speaking

on the future of Tsingtau, said: 'Whilst this war lasts Tsingtau will be adminsistered by Japan. On its conclusion Japan will open negotiations with China.'

There are general rejoicings throughout Japan. Tokyo is decked out with flags, among which the Union Jack is prominent. A lantern procession is being arranged to celebrate the occasion.

An official report says that after the capture of the Central Fort the left wing of the attacking force advanced and occupied Chan Shan at ten minutes past five yesterday morning. Chan Shan formed the base of the right wing of the German line of defence. Meanwhile other forces captured the forts of the first line at the point of the bayonet and the dangerous defence works connecting the forts. Other forces advanced on the main line of the Iltis, Bismarck, and Moltke Forts. Suddenly the flag of surrender was run up in the breeze on the Observatory, which stands on a hill.

The Japanese casualties in the final action were 36 killed and 182 wounded. Two British officers were wounded.—*Reuter.*

The War Office announces that the following telegram has been sent to the Japanese Minister of War, Tokyo, by the Secretary of State for War: *Times*, Nov. 10, 1914

Please accept my warmest congratulations on the success of the operations against Tsingtau. Will you be so kind as to express my felicitations to the Japanese Forces engaged? The British Army is proud to have been associated with its gallant Japanese comrades in this enterprise.

KITCHENER.

November 8.

According to an official report from Reuter's Agency in Tokyo, Tsingtau fell on the morning of November 7, after a heroic defence. Fuller details are still lacking. *K. D.*, Nov. 8, 1914

The Deputy Chief of the Admiral Staff,
BEHNCKE.

Tokyo, November 10.

It is officially stated that the Japanese losses during the final assault on the fortress from the evening of Friday to the morning of Saturday amounted to 14 officers wounded *Times*, Nov. 11, 1914

and 426 men killed and wounded. The British casualties were 1 man killed and 1 man wounded. Two thousand three hundred prisoners were taken.—*Reuter.*

Amsterdam, November 12.

imes, A Berlin telegram states that the Governor of Tsingtau, *ov.* 13, through the Japanese Legation at Peking, sent the following *914* telegram to the German Emperor :

Tsingtau, November 9.

After exhausting all its means of defence, the fortress, which was stormed and broken through in the centre, fell. The fortress and the town were badly damaged by 28-centimetre howitzer fire and a strong bombardment from the sea. The force of our artillery was completely overcome.

Our losses have not yet been ascertained, but in spite of the heavy fire they are less than we expected.

MEYER-WALDECK.

November 25.

. D., According to the news available up till to-day the number *ov.* 25, of prisoners belonging to the garrison taken during the *914* fights at Tsingtau and at the fall of the fortress amounts to about 4250, including 600 wounded. The number of killed is said to be about 170, among whom are 6 officers. On board the Austro-Hungarian cruiser *Kaiserin Elisabeth,* 1 lieutenant and 8 men are wounded, and 8 men killed.

The treatment of the prisoners in Japan is said to be good.

The Japanese Government expects to supply lists of names of the dead, wounded, and prisoners at an early date.

STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT FOR THE *TIMES*

Notwithstanding the Japanese Ultimatum to Germany of August 15, 1914,[1] warlike preparations were pursued steadily and rapidly at Kiao-Chau, while all Japanese subjects residing in that port were ordered to leave it. Furthermore, no reply was forthcoming from Germany at the expiration of the Japanese Ultimatum. On and from that moment the

See *Military,* 1, p. 292 *Times Japanese Supplement*

diplomatic relations of Germany and Japan ceased, and on the afternoon of that day the Japanese Declaration of War was issued by the Mikado against Germany.

Thereupon the Emperor, the Great Field-Marshal of the Japanese Army, solemnly promulgated the following Order for warlike operations with the purpose of capturing Kiao-Chau : To the Commander-in-Chief of the 18th Independent Division,

The Lieutenant-General Kamio ; Chief of the Staff, Major-General Yamanasi.

The 18th Division :—

The 23rd Infantry Brigade, under Major-General Horiuchi ; the 24th Infantry Brigade, led by Major-General Yamada ; the 22nd Cavalry Regiment ; the 24th Field Artillery Regiment ; the 18th Battalion of Engineers ; the Independent Battalion of Engineers ; the Divisional Commissariat ; the Siege Battery Corps, led by Major-General Watanabe ; the Railway Regiment ; the Aeronautical Corps, and the Canteen Department.

The main force of the 18th Independent Division was composed of men of the island of Kiushu, famed for their traditional dauntless and deathless deeds in ancient times. These forces assembled in the neighbourhood of Nagasaki and Hirosima, and on and after August 28, 1914, they started from Nagasaki and Ujima for their memorable campaign.

On September 2 the first corps arrived, in conjunction with the Japanese Navy, in the vicinity of Ryuhkau, a small port on the northern coast of the Shantung Peninsula, where the first landing took place. Owing to terrible storms the further landing of the troops had to be postponed to September 4.

Major-General Yamada, whose section was the first to be landed, advanced on September 2 with a detachment far ahead of the main force with the definite object of occupying the neighbourhood of Heitaku, in the pass of the same name. The incessant rain for days and days had, however, flooded the rivers and streams of Shantung, converting all the roads into temporary marshes in which the mud was knee-deep. It was found almost impossible to carry forward not only the guns, but also the baggage and the commissariat wagons. At last, on September 11, the foremost detachment managed to reach Heitaku, and were followed in succession by the whole of the forces three days later.

The Cavalry Regiment had occupied Sokuboku on September 14, and on the 18th exchanged fire with the Germans garrisoned on the left bank of Hakushaka River. It was then discovered as a result of this encounter that a hostile Cavalry force was stationed at Jokosan, on the left bank of the river, and that a certain number of the German Infantry and Cavalry Forces, supplied with guns, were occupying Kutauho and Senkasai. Captain Sakuma was killed at the head of his Company in this encounter.

Meanwhile the Division continued to disembark. But, owing to the stormy weather and other considerations, a certain detachment was ordered to land near Rohsan Bay, north-east of the Tsingtau Forts. Major-General Horiuchi, commanding half of his brigade, steered as far as the Rohsan Bay from Ryuhkau, while the remainder of his force continued to disembark at Ryuhkau. These started from their respective quarters for Sokuboku.

The Horiuchi Detachment reached the port of Rohsan on September 18. Helped by the Navy, it commenced the landing on that day and completed it on the same evening.

Subsequently the detachment successfully dispersed an enemy force occupying camps in the neighbourhood of Sekijinka and Ohkashoh. On the same day the German Main Force concentrated at Ohkashoh, and on the following day, September 19, our men again drove off the enemy garrisoned near Ryuhjudai and occupied the position on the same evening. On September 20 the Japanese Force remained in the vicinity of the same position and prepared for its next move.

The Yamada detachment had triumphantly arrived at Sokuboku on September 19, and on the following day it again occupied the lines of Ranka-Kohfun and Nakamura, two miles and a half from Sokuboku. Our main force which marched from Ryuhkau against Sokuboku reached its neighbourhood, courageously surmounting all sorts of difficulties and impediments, and there completed its concentration. By that time various reports from the Air Corps and other sources confirmed the fact that the first German outpost was stationed along extensive lines from Rohsango and neighbourhood as far as the vicinity of Ryuhkau through Kokken on the east.

In the place occupied by the Horiuchi Brigade a German force some 300 strong, provided with machine-guns, had, on the morning of the 23rd, attacked our position on the height east of Hokka, which is a point two miles and a half north-west of Ryuhkau, and was effectively repulsed.

On the 25th the Japanese Forces reconnoitred the positions of the enemy, and prepared for the attack upon him, which began at 3 P.M. on the following day. The fighting lasted for three hours and a half, and at 6.30 on the same day a hostile company stationed in the neighbourhood of Anbu, south of Kokken, was routed from its positions. Simultaneously the Germans in front of the Horiuchi Brigade retired from their post. Nevertheless, the enemy stationed on the heights south of Rohsango offered us a stubborn resistance, and did not retreat that day. Before the dawn of the following day, however, he was forced reluctantly to retreat. Thus the invading Japanese Division had, by the morning of the 27th, occupied the whole lines extending from the mouth of Rison River to the neighbourhood of Kinkarei, east of Fuzan, *via* the heights south of Risonshu. During this severe fight three of the German warships vehemently bombarded the right flank of our Division, while the utmost possible efforts were made to impede the onward move of our Army by a cannonade with shrapnel shells from the outposts at Fuzan and Kozan.

With the object of capturing the advanced hostile camps along the lines of Fuzan and Kozan, the Japanese Division marched all night, thus coming close up to the German positions on September 27. The force of the Yamada Brigade and that of Horiuchi formed the right and left flanks respectively, while our field artillery occupied the heights south of Nansheh. It was a lovely moonlight night. Fuzan Hill is a steep precipice of rock, occupied by a very strong German detachment. On our left wing our commander first tried to gain the heights by despatching a portion of the force—a company chosen from among the 46th Infantry Regiment, led by Captain Satow, which advanced under exceptionally violent rifle and gun fire. It was here that our brave soldier, Captain Satow, fell, to be followed by his lieutenant, while the whole of the little company were within an inch of annihilation, from which it was only saved by its superhuman

valour. But nothing daunted it. The enemy's forts and positions were triumphantly carried at last. More than thirty courageous Germans were here captured as prisoners of war.

On the morning of September 28, 1914, the left wing of the Japanese Army began the advance to assume a fresh offensive, followed almost immediately by the right wing. The Army successfully occupied the whole of the frontal lines of Fuzan and Kozan by noon of the same day.

Before this the British Government despatched the British garrison stationed in Tientsin to join the Japanese besieging Army of Tsingtau, the Commander-in-Chief being Major-General Barnardiston, who led his troops, landing in the neighbourhood of Rohsan Bay and Ohkashoh on September 23. On the very day (September 28) when the Japanese Army occupied the front of Fuzan and Kozan he reached Yohkagun, where his troops served as a reserve for our forces.

Since September 28 both the Japanese and British Forces, occupying almost all the frontal lines extending from Fuzan to Kozan regions, made various preparations to attack and capture the main defence of the Tsingtau Forts.

The Japanese Army, face to face with the German forces along the left bank of the river Kaihaku, endeavoured to concentrate heavy guns, and to advance for the offensive. Through repeated reconnoitring it was found that the enemy's main defensive lines extended from the heights on the left bank of the river Kaihaku to Tausan through the tablelands east of Daitau. The whole lines were found to be strongly fortified, with several hundreds of guns behind them all. Even after the battle of September 28 the Germans did not cease, day or night, to bombard our lines from the various forts along the left bank of the river Kaihaku as well as from within Tsingtau Bay.

At 9.30 P.M. on October 2, the enemy infantry, 350 strong, with half a dozen machine-guns, led by the former Commander-in-Chief of the German Garrison in Tientsin, Colonel Kuhlau, made a night attack upon a small outpost patrol stationed at Sihohsan in the right front of our right wing. Helped by two machine-guns, our men successfully repulsed the enemy at last by 10.30 P.M. The enemy left behind him one officer and forty-seven men killed, while six were made prisoners.

The 3rd Japanese Heavy Siege Artillery Regiment, occupying the camps near Kozan, lay in wait for the approach of the enemy gunboat *Iltis* at 10.30 A.M. on October 4, and drove her off by a concentrated cannonade. This made it difficult for the hostile warships to approach again the right wing of our Army. Before this the 29th Infantry Brigade which left Sizuoka and Hamamatsu in the Main Island of Japan in order to join the Tsingtau fight, had reached its destination and begun to land at Rohsan Bay on October 10. Next day it advanced against Kiao-Chau Bay, where a portion of the brigade joined the right wing of the besieging army, while its main force was stationed at Iken and its neighbourhood in a westerly direction.

During the three days beginning October 10, hostile aeroplanes hovered above our Army, while the Japanese airmen hindered the movements of the enemy's aircraft. Especially on the 13th an interesting and thrilling aerial fight was fought between the German and Japanese flying machines, which resulted in the former's airmen hurriedly retreating towards the Tsingtau town.

For fifteen days beginning September 29, the Germans continued a fierce and incessant artillery fire against our Army, after which the cannonade became intermittent and slow.

On October 16 an extraordinarily violent rain storm hindered the movement of both contending forces. On the morning of the 21st a hostile infantry patrol, some thirty strong, endeavoured to attack a small Japanese patrol, stationed at the height north of Fuzansho, which the latter repulsed. Meanwhile on the 22nd half an Indian Battalion belonging to the 36th Sikh Regiment landed at Rohsan Bay.

Thus the 18th Japanese Independent Division, which had been preparing with patient perseverance for the great attack on Tsingtau Fortress, having been exposed to the daily bombardment of the hostile forces, had, on October 29, advanced its besieging lines from 1500 to 2000 metres nearer to the enemy's front. The main force of the 29th Infantry Brigade, under the command of Major-General Johohji, was added to the extreme right flank of the first front line.

The distribution and formation of the invading army was as follows :

The Right Wing, the main force of which was composed of the Johohji Brigade ; the First Central Force (the British Force) ; the Second Central Force (the Yamada Brigade).

The Left Wing (the Horiuchi Brigade) ; while the Heavy Siege Artillery Regiment was distributed at the foot of Shoh-Kozan, Suiseikoh and neighbourhood, Hokuson, as well as Kabaseki and neighbourhood.

The preparations of the invading army having been thoroughly completed, the most auspicious day was chosen—October 31—in honour of the celebration of the Mikado's birthday, to commence the bombardment by the siege artillery. At the hour when the summit of Mount Fusan was just dimly tinged with the first pale light of the dawn our siege artillery gunners began their simultaneous cannonade. Hundreds of thousands of deafening thunderbolts seemed simultaneously to shake the earth amidst the glare of terrific lightning flashes. Volume after volume of the darkening shell-smoke spread densely over each of the enemy forts, a deadly pall which was wellnigh heartrending even for mere spectators. Indeed, the intensity of horror that formed the atmosphere of the whole scene of tremendous and destructive violence baffles expression.

Suddenly at 7 A.M. an immensely thick column of black smoke rose like a huge tower into the mid-sky from the great port of Tsingtau. The enormous oil stores of the German dockyard had exploded ! On the Iltis Fortress not only the heavy guns of our army, but also the severe cannonade from the Japanese Fleet concentrated their combined fire, so that by noon of the same day it was irretrievably damaged, as was also the Tohsan Fortress. The enemy fire in response to ours was quite feeble.

The first day of November opened with the steady maintenance of our terrific bombardment. The fire concentrated both on the Fort of Daitohchin and the Central Fortress proved exceptionally effective. On the same evening an Austrian warship emerged at a point some 7000 metres off the west of the huge mole of Tsingtau and bombarded our right flank, only to be driven off by the Japanese Heavy Artillery Regiment. The whole day of November 2 saw

again the continuation of severe bombardment by our Army, which succeeded in occupying almost all the front lines extending from the neighbourhood of Sihoh to that of Fusansho.

There was again a tremendous storm on November 3, with the resultant inundation of all the attacking camps. Many landslips occurred, causing great difficulties to the offensive operations. To make the matter worse, moreover, the lowering dense clouds completely overshadowed the whole of the forts in Tsingtau. The bombardment was seriously hampered. On the same night one of our lines approached close to the enemy, and succeeded, by dawn of the following day, in occupying the German positions for a length of 500 metres, west of Fusansho, after carrying the heights from Pompusho as far as those east of Yuhkasho. On November 5, the enemy's resistance grew extremely active; but all the forces of our first line pressed the enemy more and more, so that the same night saw nearly all the offensive camps of our army advanced to the wire entanglements, right before his outer trenches in front of the forts. There we entrenched.

On November 6 our first line increased the pressure against the enemy camps. The following shows how the fighting developed along the whole line.

The right front of the Second Central Force, which was commissioned to attack the enemy Central Fort, found that, on the night of November 6, his defensive fighting was not as energetic as it used to be. Especially his outposts had shown perceptible weakness. Our Brigade started at once for the destruction of the first German trench before the Central Fortress. Without meeting any particular resistance on the part of the enemy, we succeeded in destroying three lines of barbed wire entanglement one after another; and at half-past 1 in the morning of November 7 the Japanese Army captured the fort, together with 200 prisoners.

The moment the German Central Fortress was captured by the Japanese all other forts, which hitherto maintained strict silence, opened fire simultaneously, concentrating their bombardment upon the newly captured fort. The Japanese detachment which occupied it had therefore sustained a loss of a few dozen men killed and wounded. The right wing of our Second Central Force advanced furiously against the eastern Fortress of Daitohchin amid the showers of shells and

bullets from the enemy, and thus sustained a number of losses in killed and wounded. Nothing could, however, stop the onrush of our men, nor daunt their reckless valour. The fortress fell into our hands at 5 o'clock on the morning of the 7th.

Before this our left wing under General Horiuchi, whose task was to capture the Northern Fort of Shoh-Tohsan, seized the well-timed opportunity as the fight of our Second Central Force developed; and carried out the onrush at about 5 A.M. on the 7th and captured it at once.

Our right wing, which advanced against the Coastal Fortress of the enemy's extreme left flank, met with a most stubborn resistance from the Germans, sustaining serious losses. Assisted by our Artillery Regiment, it was just about to commence its well-known charge against the enemy when, at 7 A.M., the Germans hoisted a white flag and surrendered.

The British force continued its attack. A section of its troops rushed into the Fort of Daitohchin at about 6.30 A.M., and was followed by its main force soon afterwards.

The Japanese Heavy Siege Artillery, Field Artillery, and the Naval Heavy Artillery Regiments continued for some days a violent and effective bombardment against the enemy's forts, seriously damaging or completely destroying them, and thus rendered effective assistance to the attack of our Infantry and Engineer Forces. Meanwhile our Aerial Corps incessantly sent out the flying machines, and did invaluable reconnoitring work, as well as participating in the fight from mid air.

Such was the progress of the Tsingtau battles; during half an hour from 7 o'clock in the morning of November 7 all the forts of Kiao-Chau fell one after the other in quick succession, and we saw a white flag flying high above the Observation Tower. Subsequently the enemy's military envoy appeared with his suite at the north-eastern end of Tsingtau town. The Japanese envoy, Major Kashii, interviewed him at Toh-Gogason at 9.20 A.M., when he received a letter of surrender from the German Governor-General, Waldeck.

On the evening of the same day Major-General Yamanashi and Commander Takahashi, the Japanese Envoys Plenipotentiary, proceeded to the Moltke Barrack and interviewed the German Envoy Plenipotentiary, Colonel Zacksell. At 7

P.M. the capitulation of Tsingtau was signed and sealed between them. Before the bombardment, however, a special message was sent through the wireless to the German Headquarters in Tsingtau conveying the Mikado's will to save and succour non-combatants. Hence, all the women and children were transferred from the seat of war as far as to Tientsin.

The following shows the number of casualties on both sides, together with the number of prisoners of war, guns, rifles, and other munitions captured by the Japanese Army :—

THE JAPANESE ARMY

Killed and died of wounds (officers and men)	416
Wounded	1542

THE GERMAN ARMY

Killed (officers and men)	210
Wounded	550
Died of illness	150
Prisoners of War :—	
Officers	201
Non-commissioned officers and men	4366
Others	122
Total German Prisoners	4689

Spoils of War :—

Rifles.—30,000.
Ammunition.—5,000,000 rounds.
Machine-guns.—45.
Guns of varying calibre.—150.
Ammunition for same.—55,400 rounds.
Explosives.—120 cases.
Motor-cars.—76.
Horses.—500.

On the occasion of the fall of Tsingtau, the Great Field-Marshal His Majesty the Mikado of Japan issued the following Message to his Army and Navy who had participated in the campaign :—

'Tsingtau was the military base of the enemy in East

Asia, whose defensive works on land and water were not at all to be despised.

'Our Army and Navy which participated in the siege courageously co-operated with each other from the first with admirable discipline, and succeeded in capturing the German forts and sinking their warships. The object of the war is attained with the fall of the enemy's stronghold. We hereby express our satisfaction with the manner in which you all, officers and men, have ably fulfilled the heavy task imposed upon you and achieved great and meritorious deeds.'

General Kamio replied :—

'For the fall of Tsingtau forts achieved by our Division through your Majesty's illustrious dignity, we now are favoured with the gracious Imperial Message and are thereby filled with gratitude to your Imperial Majesty.

'I, Mitsuomi, your Majesty's humble servant, representing all our Division, beg herewith tremblingly to tender our most sincere thanks to your Imperial Majesty.'

THE BRITISH AT TSINGTAU

Despatches from Brigadier-General in Command

No. 1

Brigadier-General N. W. Barnardiston, M.V.O.,
to the War Office.

Investing Line before Tsingtau,
October 9, 1914.

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Sir,—I have the honour to report that the force under my command embarked at Tientsin on the 19th September in the hired transports *Kwang Ping*, *Shao Shing*, and *Shuntien*, and, escorted from Taku Bar by H.M.S. *Triumph* and the torpedo-boat destroyer *Usk*, arrived at Wei-hai-wei at 2.15 P.M. on 20th September.

The number of mules necessary to complete our requirements in transport, which had been purchased by Captain Knaggs, Indian Army, were there embarked, that officer offering valuable assistance both there and also on disembarkation at Lao Shan Bay.

The s.s. *Shenking*, chartered by the Naval authorities as a hospital carrier, for conveyance of sick and wounded to Wei-hai-wei, joined us, and the whole left at 4 P.M. on 21st September.

Before leaving, I inspected the arrangements made by Captain House, R.N., and Fleet-Surgeon Clarke, on the hospital carrier, and also on shore for the reception of the sick and wounded. These two officers, especially the last named, deserve the greatest credit for the excellent arrangements made to meet all our requirements.

Lao Shan Bay was reached at 2 P.M. on 22nd September, and arrangements were made with H.M.S. *Triumph*, the Japanese Navy, and the Military Disembarkation Authorities for the disembarkation of the Force on the following day.

Accordingly on 23rd September, the 2nd Bn. South Wales Borderers disembarked at 8 A.M., followed by stores, ponies, mules and carts, etc. The men worked hard and cheerfully at landing and stacking stores, etc., and the entire disembarkation was accomplished by 6 A.M. on 24th September, with the exception of Base stores not immediately required, which were left on board the s.s. *Kwang Ping* in anticipation of a change of Base to Shatzukou Bay, within about ten miles of the lines of investment.

The 24th September was spent in transferring stores from landing place to Base Supply Depot.

I sent Major H. G. Pringle, General Staff, to Chimo, to ascertain the wishes of the Japanese Commander-in-Chief, who, I was informed, had just arrived at that place.

I despatched Captain C. D. Hamilton Moore, D.A.A. and Q.M.G., to reconnoitre two roads over the Lao Shan Range, by which I thought I could move the force towards the left of the line of investment, which would be the most convenient position for purposes of supply, as my transport was only sufficient to carry four days' rations.

One of these roads was found to be quite unsuitable and the other only possible with a complete reorganisation of the transport, using pack mules or coolies over the worst parts of the Pass, and man-handling such carts as were necessary for use on the farther side.

I was prepared to make this reorganisation if necessary.

On arrival, however, on the 25th, at Pu-li, about six miles

from Lao Shan Bay, I learned that the Japanese Commander wished to use the Force under my command in the centre of the line, and he desired me, therefore, to march *via* Chimo and Liuting towards Litsun.

I also gathered that the Japanese plan of operations was to advance south from Chimo on 27th and 28th, and to attack on 29th and 30th the German advanced line, extending from Prince Henry Hill to Ka Shan, in order that siege material might be brought up to bombard the main position in front of Tsingtau.

To comply with the wishes of the Japanese Commander implied a very heavy strain on my transport, and probably very short rations, as it implied a line of communications nearly forty miles in length, over a single, bad, narrow and congested road, or rather track.

It was essential, however, to make the effort, and I decided to do so, even if we had to exist on half rations.

On the 26th September the Force marched to Chimo, about thirteen miles, where it arrived at 11.30 A.M., the transport arriving later in the afternoon, and a convoy of supplies from the Base about 11 P.M., after experiencing the greatest difficulties, owing to the blocked roads.

I consider that the officers and others concerned deserve the greatest credit for accomplishing what seemed an almost insuperable task, and I desire specially to bring to notice the excellent services rendered by Captain Don, Indian Supply and Transport Corps.

To the men, the marches, although not long, were very trying, owing to the constant halts and checks owing to the road being blocked by Japanese artillery and transport, but, with the exception of a few cases of fever, no men fell out.

On arrival at Chimo my supply difficulties were greatly lessened by the offer of the Japanese military authorities to use their transport for the purpose of establishing an advanced supply depot at Chimo, from which point our own transport would be able to work forward to the refilling point.

On the 27th the force moved on about nine miles to Liuting and halted. I rode on to Divisional Headquarters, where I was received very cordially by Lieut.-General Kamio, the Japanese Commander-in-Chief, who gave me an outline of the following day's operations, in which we were to take part.

On the 28th, in accordance with his orders, the force proceeded towards Litsun with a view of participating in the attack on the German advanced position, which was then being reconnoitred by the Japanese troops.

The Germans holding the position retired, however, before the Japanese advanced troops, who occupied the position which it was General Kamio's intention to have assaulted on the following night and morning.

The force under my command was therefore not engaged, and marched on to a village about two and a half miles in rear of the Japanese line, where it bivouacked.

This position, however, proved to be unsuitable, as we were exposed to the enemy's artillery fire, luckily without suffering any casualties ; but on the 30th September I moved the force to the reverse slopes of a hill about one mile to the eastward of our former position, where the men were under cover, and were able to make splinter-proof shelters.—I have, etc.,

N. W. BARNARDISTON, *Brigadier-General,*
Commanding Tsingtau Expeditionary Force.

No. 2

Brigadier-General N. W. Barnardiston, M.V.O.,
to the War Office.

Investing Lines before Tsingtau,
October 29, 1914.

SIR,—In continuation of my despatch dated 9th instant, I have the honour to report that on the 10th instant I received orders from the Japanese Commander to the effect that the Force under my command was to take its place in the front line of the investing force, a front of about 600 yards being assigned to us.

Accordingly, on the 11th instant I directed the Officer Commanding 2nd Bn. South Wales Borderers to take up, with two companies, a line running approximately north-west and south-west through a point a little north of Point 177 on Shuang Shan, furnishing two piquets with their supports and a local reserve. The remaining companies of the 2nd Bn. South Wales Borderers were distributed in such

nullahs, south of Huang-Chia-Ving, as afforded the best cover from shell fire.

2. The range of heights forming the position of the line of investment, south of that village, with their under-features, is intersected by numerous deep ravines of clay, excellent for protection and accommodation in dry weather. In wet weather, however, such as we have been unfortunately experiencing, the loose soil is washed away, the sides of the nullahs fall in, carrying with them the shelters for the troops ; every valley becomes a torrent and every road or track a mass of deep mud. Cover for the men both from fire and weather becomes impossible. The men have been soaked through and through for as much as forty-eight hours, and equipment has been buried by falls of earth, and ammunition has rusted, but in spite of all hardships and privations the spirits and health of the troops have been excellent, and they have worked continuously at digging and at the heavy fatigue work of carrying rations and ammunition and heavy beams for head cover one and a half miles to the front where wheeled traffic has been impossible—often in liquid mud halfway up to the knees.

3. By degrees, and as I can obtain space, I am moving the rear companies up towards the front line preparatory to the attack on the fortress. Considerable delay has taken place in the preparations of the Japanese owing to the heavy rains, but I learned yesterday that the bombardment will commence on the 31st instant.

The health of the troops, notwithstanding the hard work and trying weather, is most satisfactory.

5. The line of investment we now hold extends from Kiao-Chau Bay to the sea, running approximately through Kushan, 119 degrees 21 minutes, 36 degrees 8 minutes (Lat. 36 deg. 8 min. N., Long. 119 deg. 21 min. E.), the high ground south of Chia-Lien-Kow, to Foushan (Prince Henry's Hill).

The following is a summary of the order for the attack on the fortress, so far as concerns the British Force :—

The whole of the enemy's main line of defence will constitute the front of attack. All arrangements are calculated for a deliberate advance, but any opportunity of attacking which presents itself will be seized upon.

The front of attack is divided into four sections, the right

central section being assigned to the force under my command. One front of about 600 yards is roughly bounded by two parallel lines running north-east and south-west—the right flank line passing through Tashan, 119 degrees 22 minutes, 36 degrees 7 minutes (36 deg. 7 min. N., 119 deg. 22 min. E.), village and Point 375, 372 ? the left, the north-west corner of Ho-Hsi and the eastern corner of Tiu-Tung-Chien (Tai-Tung-Chen ?).

To-morrow the line of investment will be advanced to a line running through Kushan, Shvang-Shan, 119 degrees 6 minutes, 36 degrees 6 minutes (36 deg. 6 min. N., 119 deg. 6 min. E.), Tung-Wu-Chia-Tsun, Tien-Chia-Tsun, Hsin-Chia-Chuang, in the construction of which working parties from each section are employed daily and nightly.

When the bombardment begins, the Infantry and Engineers of the front line will prepare for the subsequent advance, and during the night of the 1st November will occupy a line through the high ground west of Han-Chla-Chuang, and south of Tang-Wu-Chia-Tsun, and north of Fou-Shan-So—also that village.

The first position of attack will be prepared on this line, and during the first two or three nights will be strengthened, communicating trenches completed, and preparations made for the next advance.

The second position of attack will be strongly constructed, approximately on the line Pump Station, Hsi-Wu-Chla-Tsun, the high ground east of Kang-Chla-Chuang and the ridge west of Fou-Shan-So, and in this position preparations will be made for the destruction of obstacles and the subsequent approach.

The main portion of the siege artillery will first fire on the enemy's forts and the remainder against his war vessels. Subsequently, as the first line advances, this portion of the artillery will fire on the enemy's redoubts.

Co-operation with the Navy is arranged for.

6. I am collecting twelve days' supplies at a suitable place in rear of the advanced position to provide against the eventuality of its being found impossible, in this very difficult country, to bring them up during the bombardment. A suitable place for my Brigade Ammunition Reserve, about two miles in rear of the first position of attack, has been selected.

The Field Hospital has been established at Che-Chla-Hsia-Chuang, about half-way between Litsun-Erh-Shan and Prince Henry Hill, and dressing stations have been arranged for in nullahs in rear of the front line.

7. The half battalion of the 36th Sikhs, under command of Lieut.-Colonel E. L. Sullivan, disembarked at Lao-Shan Bay on the 22nd instant, and arrived yesterday at the front.—I have, etc.

N. W. BARNARDISTON,
Brigadier-General.

No. 3

Brigadier-General N. W. Barnardiston, M.V.O.,
to the War Office.

Tsingtau, November 10, 1914.

SIR,—I have the honour to report the successful conclusion of this Expedition in the surrender of Tsingtau on the 7th instant.

The operations in which the force under my command have taken part proceeded as outlined in my Despatch No. 2, dated 29th October.

The advanced position indicated in that despatch was occupied on the 30th October. The bombardment commenced on the 31st, the enemy not replying to any great extent. During the first day some oil tanks and coal stores near the dockyard were burnt, and the forts and redoubts suffered severely. Throughout the bombardment the practice of the Japanese Artillery was surprisingly good, and the accuracy of their fire and their numerical superiority in guns no doubt proved the principal factor in compelling the enemy's surrender. It is stated that the Germans expended all their gun ammunition. The bombardment continued with slight intermissions until the fall of the place.

On the 1st November the first position of attack (*see* my Despatch No. 2) was occupied, and the preparation of the second position commenced. This position was ready for occupation on the 3rd instant, but, owing to its location in the immediate vicinity of the bed of the river, it was impossible to drain it or to occupy it permanently, and as it was everywhere under close infantry fire from the first position, I merely held it during the night with piquets.

On the night of the 4th November somewhat heavy artillery fire was directed on our trenches, the 36th Sikhs losing 2 Sepoys killed and 2 officers wounded, while the 2nd Bn. South Wales Borderers had also several casualties.

On the 5th November I was ordered to prepare a third position of attack on the left bank of the river. This line was to a great extent enfiladed on both flanks by Nos. 1 and 2 redoubts, especially the latter, from which annoying machine-gun fire was experienced.

The bed of the river (a small stream running over a broad bed of sand) had also to be crossed, and in doing so the working parties of the 2nd Bn. South Wales Borderers suffered somewhat severely, losing 8 non-commissioned officers and men killed and 24 wounded. The 36th Sikhs had only slight losses. Notwithstanding this a good deal of work was done, especially on the right flank.

I considered it my duty to represent to the Japanese Commander-in-Chief the untenable nature, for permanent occupation, of the portion of the third position in my front, but received a reply that it was necessary for it to be held in order to fit in with the general scheme of assault.

On the evening of the 6th, accordingly, I occupied it with piquets, and the working parties continued to improve it.

During the night, on hearing rumours of the evacuation of one or more of the redoubts, I sent out officers' patrols to ascertain if the enemy were still holding the trenches in front of us, and prepared to advance should the front be clear. They were met, however, with rifles and machine-gun fire, and reported that No. 2 redoubt, on our left, was still held.

Between 5 and 6 A.M. on the morning of the 7th the enemy started a further cannonade for field artillery and an occasional shot from their heavy guns, and I issued preparatory orders for an advance as soon as I knew the redoubts were captured. At 7 A.M. all firing ceased, and I was informed that the enemy had sent out a flag of truce. About 7.30 A.M. I received orders to advance, and, the enemy along the whole of our front having then retired, I marched into Tsingtau.

The troops under my command have behaved extremely well under trying conditions of weather and those inseparable

from siege warfare, and all ranks have worked loyally and hard.—I have, etc.

N. W. BARNARDISTON,
Brigadier-General.

No. 4

Brigadier-General N. W. Barnardiston, M.V.O.,
to the War Office.

Tsingtau, November 13, 1914.

SIR,—In continuation of my Despatch No. 3, dated 10th instant, I have the honour to forward the names of the following officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of the force under my command whom I consider deserving of special notice for their services.

These names are in addition to those mentioned in my despatch dated 9th October.

STAFF

Major H. G. Pringle, Royal Artillery.

GENERAL STAFF

Captain C. D. H. Moore, R. Warwick Regt., D.A.A. and Q.M.G.
Captain J. Gray, 36th Sikhs (attached).
Captain J. A. Hamilton, A.S.C., Base Commandant.
Major J. A. Hartigan, M.B., R.A.M.C., Senior Medical Officer.

2ND SOUTH WALES BORDERERS

Lieut.-Col. H. G. Casson, Commanding.
Major E. C. Margasson.
Captain J. Bradstock.
Captain and Adjutant G. H. Birkett.
Captain D. G. Johnson.
Lieutenant R. L. Petre.
Lieut. H. J. Simson, R. Scots (Japanese interpreter), attached.
Captain G. H. Dive, R.A.M.C., attached.

2/10423 Sgt. J. J. Ward (killed), 2/9972 Pte. G. E. Snow, 2/9004 Pte. A. Green, 2/9980 Pte. T. Jenkinson, 10171 Drmr.

W. I. Jones (killed), 10634 Pte. (Lce.-Cpl.) C. J. Foley, 10614 Pte. H. Evans (killed), 2/9952 Pte. J. West (died of wounds), 2/4528 Drmr. C. W. Lewis, 2/9244 Co. Sgt.-Maj. G. A. Davies, 7309 Sgt. H. Leach (died of wounds), 3/10249 Cpl. (Act. Sgt.) W. S. Rosier.

ARMY SERVICE CORPS

1st Cl. Staff-Sgt.-Maj. S. E. Warner (now Qrmr. and Hon. Lieut.), 1st Cl. Staff-Sgt.-Maj. A. Goodwin (now Qrmr. and Hon. Lieut.).

ROYAL ARMY MEDICAL CORPS

17933 Qrmr.-Sgt. D. E. Dean (now Sgt.-Maj.), 11313 Cpl. A. Bateman (now Sgt.), 19823 Cpl. T. J. Kilyon, 1884 Cpl. E. S. Gaughan (now Sgt.).

36TH SIKHS

Lieut.-Col. E. L. Sullivan, Commanding.
Major E. F. Knox.
Captain A. D. Martin.
Lieutenant and Adjutant S. des Vœux.
Subadar Gurmukh Singh, I.O.M.
Jemadar Sundar Singh.
Jemadar Jamal Singh.

1707 Havildar Massa Singh, 2711 Lance-Naik Bhagat Singh, 2757 Lance-Naik Harman Singh, 2829 Lance-Naik Hari Singh, 3126 Sepoy Fakir Singh, 3785 Sepoy Ram Singh, 3782 Sepoy Bant Singh.—I have, etc.

N. W. BARNARDISTON,
Brigadier-General.

WAR IN THE PACIFIC

CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO THE OCCUPATION OF GERMAN SAMOA BY AN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE FROM NEW ZEALAND.[1]

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty

September 1915.

No. 1

The Secretary of State to the Governor of New Zealand

August 6, 1914.

Cd. 7972] If your Ministers desire and feel themselves able to seize German wireless station at Samoa, we should feel that this was a great and urgent Imperial service. You will realise, however, that any territory now occupied must at the conclusion of the war be at the disposal of Imperial Government for purposes of an ultimate settlement. Other Dominions are acting on the same understanding in a similar way, and, in particular, Commonwealth is being consulted as to wireless stations at New Guinea, Yap, Marshall Islands, and Nauru or Pleasant Island. HARCOURT.

No. 2

The Governor of New Zealand to the Secretary of State

(Telegram.) *Received* 12.38 P.M., *August* 7, 1914.

Your telegram 6th August. My Government agree to seizure of Samoa. In view of possibility of presence of German

[1] [Extracts dealing with military matters. The whole correspondence is given in *Naval*, 1, pp. 135-160.]

cruiser please telegraph at once what escort can be provided and when. LIVERPOOL.

No. 3

The Governor of New Zealand to the Secretary of State

August 8, 1914.

I am desired by my Government to inform you that provided that escort can be furnished, arrangements have now been made to despatch to Samoa an expeditionary force on Tuesday, August 11. I have to ask for an immediate reply. LIVERPOOL.

No. 4

The Secretary of State to the Governor of New Zealand

August 8, 1914.

Your telegram August 8. Admiralty see no objection to departure expedition to Samoa about 11th instant when ready, provided latest local information at disposal Senior Naval Officer, New Zealand, does not render departure inexpedient and provided he has been consulted and concurs in naval arrangements. They consider that, if guns be available and time permits, transports may with advantage be lightly armed. Escort of one cruiser at least will be detailed. Instructions will be sent to Senior Naval Officer accordingly. Please inform me of composition and strength force and sea transport. HARCOURT.

No. 5

The Governor of New Zealand to the Secretary of State

August 9, 1914.

August 9. Your telegram of August 8; one battalion of infantry, one company engineers, two fifteen-pounders, two six-pounders, with signal, medical, and army service corps details, two transports. Total force, 1383.

LIVERPOOL.

No. 6

The Secretary of State to the Governor of New Zealand

(Telegram). *Sent* 6.35 P.M., *August* 18, 1914.

In connection with expedition against Samoa, British flag should be hoisted in all territories successfully occupied by His Majesty's forces and suitable arrangements made for temporary administration ; but no proclamation formally annexing any such territory should be made without previous communication with His Majesty's Government. HARCOURT.

No. 7

Admiralty to Colonial Office

Admiralty, August 30, 1914.

SIR,—I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to transmit herewith, for your information, copy of telegram of this date received from the Rear-Admiral Commanding Australian Squadron, respecting the occupation of Apia.—I am, etc.

W. GRAHAM GREENE.

ENCLOSURE IN No. 7

Telegram from Rear-Admiral Commanding Australian Squadron, Suva, to Admiralty

Took possession of Apia (Samoa Islands) to-day, August 30 (Eastern time).

In reply to my summons to surrender, Acting Governor, in absence of Governor, stated that he submitted to the occupation of the island.

I carried out extensive sweeping operations before entering harbour, but found no mines. No resistance was offered. There have been no enemy ships in harbour for some time. Landing of troops was commenced during this afternoon. British flag hoisted. Officer commanding troops took over control from Lieutenant-Governor at 2 P.M. to-day.

Will leave with *Australia, Melbourne,* and *Montcalm* for Suva as soon as disembarkation is complete, probably to-morrow.

No. 8

The Governor of New Zealand to the Secretary of State

(Telegram.) *Received* 6.0 P.M., *August* 30, 1914.

30th August.—I have received the following telegram from Admiral, *Australia*:

'Apia surrendered at 10.0 A.M., 30th August, Eastern time. Military expedition landed in afternoon without opposition.' LIVERPOOL.

No. 9

The Secretary of State to the Governor of New Zealand

(Telegram.) *Sent* 2.10 P.M., *August* 31, 1914.

Your telegram 30th August. Please convey to your Ministers heartiest congratulations of His Majesty's Government on successful occupation of Samoa by expeditionary force. HARCOURT.

No. 10

The Governor of New Zealand to the Secretary of State

(Extract.) *September* 2, 1914.

Officer Commanding the Troops, Samoa, has sent me the following message:

'Expedition under my command, with the assistance of the allied fleet, occupied town of Apia, August 31 (Eastern time). Governor of Samoa, who surrendered to me, is being sent with the prisoners to Fiji. I am glad to report that there was no opposition, that the health of the troops is excellent, and that there have been no serious casualties since the expedition started. —LOGAN.' LIVERPOOL.

ENCLOSURE 1 IN No. 12

(Despatch No. 1.)

Government House, Apia, Samoa,
September 2, 1914.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

I have the honour to report that the forces under my command, having embarked on H.M. Transports No. 1

(*Moeraki*) and No. 2 (*Monowai*) on August 14, 1914, at Wellington, sailed from that port at daybreak on the following morning.

We were met at the previously arranged rendezvous by H.M. Ships *Psyche*, *Philomel*, and *Pyramus* at 4 P.M. on August 16. On this and the following nights no lights were shown.

Throughout the voyage musketry and other exercises were carried out by the troops.

On August 20 the convoy arrived at Noumea, New Caledonia, at 11 A.M., and there met the French cruiser *Montcalm*. During the day I, with my Staff Officer, attended a joint naval and military conference on board H.M.S. *Philomel*.

On August 21 H.M.A. Ships *Australia* and *Melbourne*, with Rear-Admiral Sir George E. Patey in command, arrived in port, and, under instructions from the Rear-Admiral, I attended on board the flagship and received operation orders (provisional) for the attack upon Samoa. In the afternoon I paid an official visit to His Excellency the Governor of New Caledonia. The troops were, with the permission of His Excellency, exercised on shore, and everywhere met with a most cordial reception.

On the morning of August 22, while the transports were moving out into the stream, Transport No. 2 drifted on to a sandbank, from which she was only refloated at 8.30 P.M., after her cargo had been lightened and the troops temporarily disembarked.

On August 23 the allied fleets and transports sailed for Suva, Fiji, arriving at that port during the morning of August 26, on which date I accompanied the Rear-Admiral on an official visit to His Excellency the Governor of Fiji, later attending a conference on board H.M.A.S. *Australia*.

At the request of His Excellency the Governor of Fiji, I enrolled one officer of the Fiji Constabulary as German Interpreter, and also four members of the Fiji Rifle Association and six members of the Legion of Frontiersmen as privates in the 3rd Auckland Regiment. There were also embarked one officer and nineteen men from H.M.S. *Sealark*, one naval signaller Royal Naval Reserve, one nursing sister, and fourteen natives of Samoa—these latter to be dispersed throughout the island in order to explain our intentions. I am much

indebted to the Rev. Father Fox, of Suva, for bringing me into touch with the Samoans above referred to.

On August 27, the allied fleets and transports sailed from Suva, Fiji, in the afternoon, and arrived at Apia at daybreak on the 30th (Eastern time). In response to an ultimatum conveyed under a flag of truce from H.M.S. *Psyche*, the Deputy-Governor replied that although, in the temporary absence of His Excellency the Governor of Samoa, he would not accept the responsibility of surrendering, no opposition would be offered to the landing of the armed forces.

The troops were thereupon disembarked under cover of the guns of the allied fleets in manner previously detailed in orders ; the disembarkation was carried out without casualty. All Government buildings were immediately seized and Government officials and police placed under arrest.

I established my headquarters at the Government buildings at 4 P.M., received His Excellency the Governor of Samoa, and informed him that I regretted that I must place him under arrest. On this date I received from the European residents in Samoa the attached memorial (Sub-enclosure 1).[1]

[1] [Printed in *Naval* p. 148]

On the following day, August 31 (Eastern time), at 8 A.M., the British flag was formally hoisted on the Government buildings in the presence of the officers of the New Zealand Division, Royal Navy, the troops, and the leading native chiefs. At this ceremony I read a Proclamation, copies of which, in English, German, and Samoan, I enclose herewith for Your Excellency's perusal (Sub-enclosure 2).

I conferred with the native chiefs, whose attitude towards us is extremely friendly, and I am informed from reliable sources that the vast majority of the natives are in sympathy with the British occupation of Samoa.

I also conferred with the German heads of department and their subordinates, and, as they have given their parole to do nothing inimical to British interests and to carry out their duties loyally, I have retained them, with two exceptions, in their respective offices at the same salaries as they were previously receiving.

I am of opinion that the various departments are largely overstaffed and should be reduced as opportunity occurs to do so with the minimum of friction.

His Excellency the Governor of Samoa.—After having, as

already stated, informed His Excellency the Governor of Samoa that I placed him under arrest, I permitted him to return to his residence under escort of an officer of my staff, in order to obtain such wearing apparel and effects as he might require, and then caused him to be placed on board Transport No. 1 until the following morning, when he was again permitted to land under escort and attend further to his affairs, subsequently proceeding to Transport No. 2, in which ship he is now being conveyed to Suva, under escort of an officer of the 5th Regiment. I ordered that both on Transport No. 1 and Transport No. 2 His Excellency should be treated as an honoured guest and accorded every consideration.

Wireless.—I am informed by the Senior Naval Officer, New Zealand Division, that the wireless station at Apia could be heard tuning up after H.M.S. *Psyche* had sent in a flag of truce about 9.30 A.M., and only desisted on being ordered by the Rear-Admiral to do so. On my troops reaching the wireless station it was found that some essential parts of the engine which drives the dynamo had been removed and that some of the aerials had been tampered with. The aerials were immediately repaired, and we have been capable of receiving messages since August 30, but we have been unable to repair the engine, or, up to the present, discover the missing parts. The engine which was brought by the Expeditionary Force has, however, to-day been installed, and I hope to-night to be able to obtain communication with Your Excellency either through Suva or Pago Pago. I enclose for Your Excellency's perusal a Proclamation (No. 2) (Sub-enclosure 3) which deals with the above subject, and which I deemed it necessary to issue. I should add that investigation disclosed the fact that preparations had been made for the destruction of the wireless station by dynamite.

Section D Battery.—As explained later in this despatch, it became necessary to send Transport No. 2 to Suva with the least possible delay, and in the hurry of so doing a misunderstanding resulted in Transport No. 2 putting to sea while still having on board a section of D Battery, which had been brought to Apia in her. The two guns of this section had, however, been brought ashore, and part of the section of D Battery, which arrived in Transport No. 1, will be quite able to serve these two guns. I keenly regret the temporary loss of the

services of the section which arrived in Transport No. 2. I only became aware of the fact that these men were still on board after Transport No. 2 had proceeded some twenty miles to sea, and the necessities of the situation did not permit me at that stage to take steps to have Transport No. 2 recalled.

. . . . . .

Troops of the Garrison.—With reference to the section of D Battery now on board Transport No. 2, if that vessel proceed to New Zealand I have to ask that this section be ordered to rejoin its headquarters in Apia. With regard to the escort on board Transport No. 2, I have to ask that these be discharged in New Zealand, with the exception of Lieutenant D. A. Kenny, the officer commanding, who would rejoin his regiment here.

I propose to return to New Zealand, as opportunity offers, all men who may prove medically unsuitable. I also propose to discharge, when opportunity to return them to Fiji offers, those men of the 3rd Auckland Regiment who were attested in Samoa as already mentioned.

I hope to be permitted to retain the remainder of the force so long as German cruisers remain in the Pacific, but when these have been disposed of I see no reason why the garrison should remain at its present strength, as I anticipate no trouble whatever from the Samoan natives.

On the whole, the discipline of the troops has been good, and has improved considerably since the expedition started.

. . . . . .

I have, etc.,

ROBERT LOGAN, *Colonel,*
Administrator of Samoa.

To His Excellency The Right Honourable
The Earl of Liverpool, G.C.M.G., M.V.O.,
Governor of New Zealand.

SUB-ENCLOSURE 2 TO DESPATCH NO. 1

PROCLAMATION

1. The New Zealand Government of His Britannic Majesty King George V. now occupy for His Majesty all the German territories situated in the islands of the Samoan group.

2. All inhabitants of the occupied territories are commanded to submit to all such directions as may be given by any officer of the occupying force.

3. Every inhabitant of the occupied territories is forbidden to assist or to communicate directly or indirectly with the German Government or the German forces, or to resist directly or indirectly the occupying forces or any member thereof.

4. All public property of the German Government must be delivered forthwith by those responsible for its safety to the possession of the occupying force.

5. Private property of individuals will only be taken if required for the purposes of the occupying force, and if so taken will be paid for at a reasonable price at the termination of the war.

6. No person shall, except with the written permission of an authorised officer of the occupying force, be out of doors on any night between the hours of 10 P.M. and 6 A.M., nor change his or her present place of residence, nor use any boat or canoe.

7. All public meetings are prohibited.

8. No circular or newspaper or printed matter of any description shall be circulated, printed, or issued, without the written permission of an authorised officer of the occupying force.

9. No spirituous or intoxicating liquor shall be manufactured or sold without the written permission of an authorised officer of the occupying force, nor shall liquor be supplied to any Samoan native.

10. All officials of the German Government who desire to continue to carry out their functions under the present Military Government must report themselves forthwith to the Commander of the Occupying Force, and such as may be retained in their employment will receive the same rate of remuneration as was received by them prior to the occupation.

11. All inhabitants having in their possession any motor-cars, horses, carts, or other means of transport must forthwith report the description of the same to the Provost-Marshal of the Occupying Force.

12. All arms of every description, whether the property

of the German Government or of private persons, must forthwith be delivered at the office of the Provost-Marshal of the Occupying Force.

13. All persons who quietly submit to the administration of affairs by the occupying force will be protected in their occupations except in the case of such occupations as may be contrary to the best interests of the occupying force.

14. All persons who in any manner resist the occupying force or attempt by violence or otherwise to interfere with or overthrow the Military Government now established for His Majesty King George Fifth, or who fail to obey the above-written or any subsequent commands of any officer of the occupying force, will be punished according to the laws of war.

Given at Apia this twenty-ninth day of August in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and fourteen.

ROBERT LOGAN, *Colonel,*
Commanding the Occupying Forces.

God Save the King.

SUB-ENCLOSURE 3 TO DESPATCH No. 1

PROCLAMATION No. 2

1. Every person having possession of any machinery or material formerly used in or in connection with the wireless installation at Apia, or the railway leading thereto, is required to deliver the same immediately to the Provost-Marshal.

2. If the above requisition is not complied with before midnight on September 2, 1914, all houses and grounds in Apia will be searched, and any person found to be harbouring any of the above-mentioned machinery or materials will be dealt with according to the laws of war, and will receive the extreme penalty.

Given at Apia this first day of September 1914.

ROBERT LOGAN, *Colonel,*
Administrator of Samoa.

God Save the King.

ENCLOSURE 2 IN NO. 12.

(Despatch No. 2.)

Government House, Apia, Samoa, September 5, 1914.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,—I am pleased to be able to inform Your Excellency that, since the date of despatch No. 1, matters in connection with the occupation of Samoa have progressed as smoothly as could be expected. The troops under my command have now moved into two camps on sound ground conveniently situated for the defence of Apia, and measures have been taken for the safeguarding of the port.

Wireless.—I accidentally omitted to state in despatch No. 1 that a light petrol railway, leading from the harbour to the wireless station, was found to be unworkable, owing to parts of the engine having been removed. I am glad to be able to state, however, that the engine has now been repaired, and in a very few days the engine should be again running right out to the wireless station, and already the railway has been of considerable service.

The wireless installation is now working satisfactorily, and, as Your Excellency is aware, we are now able to send messages. Our power to do so, however, is necessarily limited, owing to our inability to use the engines properly belonging to the installation.

. . . . . .

Expeditions.—Since my last despatch a troop of mounted rifles was despatched to Falealeli, being away from Apia for three days and returning with Herr Osbahr, the local Administrator of South Upolu. I have conferred with Herr Osbahr, and have decided to retain him in office, and he has to-day returned to his district. I have made Herr Osbahr fully understand the point, already referred to, which was raised by the other officials.

A patrol has visited Safatu.

Troops.—H.M. Transport *Monowai,* which is due to leave Apia to-morrow morning, will carry with her about seventy-five of all ranks. Embarkation states for these officers and men will be forwarded to headquarters. This number includes all the men (with one exception) who were enlisted at Fiji in the 3rd (Auckland) Regiment. These should be returned to Fiji and discharged there.

In H.M. Transport *Monowai* there returned to Apia the fifty officers and men of D Battery, and also Lieutenant Kenny, of the 5th (Wellington) Regiment. These details have now been disembarked.—I have, etc.,

ROBERT LOGAN, *Colonel,*
Administrator of Samoa.

To His Excellency the Right Honourable
The Earl of Liverpool, G.C.M.G., M.V.O.,
Governor of New Zealand.

CORRESPONDENCE RESPECTING MILITARY OPERATIONS AGAINST GERMAN POSSESSIONS IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC.[1]

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty, November 1915.

No. 1

The Secretary of State to the Governor-General of Australia

(Extract.) *August* 6, 1914.

If your Ministers desire and feel themselves able to seize [Cd. 7
German wireless stations at New Guinea, Yap in Marshall Islands, and Nauru or Pleasant Island, we should feel that this was a great and urgent Imperial service. You will realise, however, that any territory now occupied must at conclusion of war be at the disposal of Imperial Government for purposes of an ultimate settlement. Other Dominions are acting on the same understanding in similar way, and, in particular, suggestion to New Zealand is being made with regard to Samoa. HARCOURT.

No. 2

The Governor-General of Australia to the Secretary of State

(Telegram.) *Received* 8.10 A.M., *August* 10, 1914.

Expeditionary force of 1500 men being organised by Government for action suggested in your telegram 6th August.

[1] [Extract. The complete correspondence will be found in *Naval*, 1, pp. 219-267.]

Despatching on merchant cruiser carrying four 4.7 guns. Departure subject to reports from Patey. Will communicate date of despatch later. FERGUSON.

No. 3

The Secretary of State to the Governor-General of Australia

(Telegram.) *Sent* 6.35 P.M., *August* 18, 1914.

In connection with expedition against German possessions in Pacific, British flag should be hoisted in all territories successfully occupied by His Majesty's forces, and suitable arrangements made for temporary administration; but no proclamation formally annexing any such territory should be made without previous communication with His Majesty's Government. HARCOURT.

No. 6

The Governor-General of Australia to the Secretary of State

September 13, 1914.

Following telegram has been received from Rear-Admiral Patey this day :—

'Australian Naval Reserve captured wireless station Herbertshöhe 1 A.M., September 12, after eighteen hours' bush fighting over about six miles. Herbertshöhe and Rabaul garrisoned and base established Simpsonhafen. Our total casualties: two officers killed, one officer wounded, names already reported. Reserve seamen: four killed, three wounded. Have prisoners: German officers two, including commandant; German non-commissioned officers fifteen; and native police fifty-six. German casualties, about twenty to thirty killed.' FERGUSON.

No. 14

The Governor-General of Australia to the Secretary of State

November 19, 1914.

Administrator of Rabaul reports Australian troops took possession of Nauru November 6; British flag hoisted, occupation proclaimed, garrison posted; German Commis-

sioner, twenty-five others, taken prisoners and sent to Sydney by *Messina*, which left Nauru November 15; thirty-seven British employés Pacific Phosphate Company repatriated, seven British employés Pacific Phosphate Company deported two months ago by Britishers to Ocean Island; wireless station not damaged. . . .

FERGUSON.

No. 16

The Governor-General of Australia to the Secretary of State

Governor-General's Office, Melbourne, October 29, 1914.

SIR,—I have the honour to transmit herewith, for the information of His Majesty's Government, copies of despatches received from Colonel W. Holmes, D.S.O., V.D., Commanding Naval and Military Expedition.

The Commonwealth Attorney-General has been asked to advise with regard to the actual terms of surrender agreed upon, and on receipt of his reply I shall have the honour to further communicate with you in the matter.—I have, etc.

R. M. FERGUSON, *Governor-General.*

ENCLOSURE 1 IN No. 16

H.M.A.S. 'Berrima,' Rabaul, New Britain, September 13, 1914.

SIR,—The expedition under my command reached Blanche Bay on the 11th instant. At daylight on that day an advance party of thirty-five Naval Reserves, under the command of Lieutenant Bowen, and accompanied by Captain Pockley, Army Medical Corps, was sent ashore. Half of the party was landed at Kabakaul and the other at Herbertshöhe, with instructions to push on rapidly and seize the wireless stations believed to exist in this vicinity. It was soon discovered that these places were defended, and the enemy did not intend to give them up without a fight. Finding that these parties were met with opposition, I reinforced them with two more companies of the Naval Reserves, two machine-

gun sections, and a detachment of the Army Medical Corps, under Commander Elwell, at Kabakaul. Commander Beresford also accompanied this party. About 11.15 A.M. a request was received from the shore for a medical officer to be sent from this ship to attend to a wounded German, and soon afterwards I received information that Captain Pockley and Able Seaman Williams had been seriously wounded and were being sent back to the ship. I then determined to put on shore at Herbertshöhe four companies of infantry, under Lieutenant-Colonel Watson, to co-operate in the attack. It was necessary to land this latter force in boats, which naturally occupied some time. In the meanwhile the naval force had pushed on in the direction of the wireless station.

The force which they had to meet consisted of German reservists and the native armed constabulary, all led by German officers. The arms carried by the natives were all up-to-date German weapons.

The line of attack was, owing to the very heavy timber on either side, practically confined to the road, across which at several points trenches had been placed, and a good deal of trouble was caused the attacking force by natives posted high up in coco-nut trees, armed with rifles.

As it did not appear that the operation would be successful before dark, instructions were given to Commander Beresford and Lieutenant-Colonel Watson to retire to the beach before dark, and I arranged with the Admiral that, on the following morning, if the resistance still continued, the fleet would shell with shrapnel the high ridge between Kabakaul and Herbertshöhe at daylight, and that immediately thereafter the attack should be resumed with vigour and the places carried. However, at nightfall the wireless station was surrendered to the force attacking from Kabakaul. I may state that this force was also accompanied by Captain Travers, my Intelligence Officer, who was present at the surrender. It was found that the wireless station was complete and well equipped, and working almost up to the last moment; but prior to surrender the iron supports of the towers had been cut through and the station thereby rendered inoperative. A party under Lieutenant Bond, and accompanied by Captain Travers, remained in possession of the wireless station during the night. As the wireless station had been rendered

useless, and there was little hope of repairs being effected for some time, I directed that it be abandoned—the instruments being first removed—and that the party there should retire to the coast. Commander Beresford was instructed to move his force to Herbertshöhe and remain there for the present as garrison.

Commander Beresford was directed yesterday to furnish full report on the day's operations, together with list of casualties, but this has not yet been received, but as far as I am aware they are as follows :—

Killed.—Captain Pockley, Army Medical Corps ; Commander Elwell, Royal Australian Navy ; Able Seamen Williams, Courtney, Moffat, Street.

Wounded.—Lieutenant Bowen, Royal Australian Navy ; Able Seamen T. Sullivan, J. Tonks, A. P. W. Skillen.

From information received by me up to the present, in the absence of Commander Beresford's report, the three officers referred to, also Lieutenant Bond, who accepted the surrender of the wireless station, and Captain Travers (Intelligence Officer), who accompanied him, acted in a very gallant way.[1] Captain Pockley removed the Red Cross badge from his arm and handed it over to one of his men who was without one, and paid the penalty with his life.

I have no information as to the total casualties on the enemy's side, but know there were quite a number. Amongst the prisoners taken by my force were three German officers, Captain Wuchert (Commanding the Native Armed Constabulary), Lieutenant Mayer, and Lieutenant Kemf, about sixteen white non-commissioned officers and men, and some fifty-six natives. The officers will probably be forwarded to Sydney by the fleet, when leaving here in a few days.

Yesterday afternoon the *Berrima* proceeded from Herbertshöhe to Rabaul and made fast to the pier at about six o'clock. Immediately afterwards the garrison for this place, consisting of four companies infantry, one section machine-guns, and one company Naval Reserves, were put ashore, and occupied the town without opposition. All Government offices, including Post Office, were seized and German flags flying removed.

[1] I wish to specially mention these five officers.—W. H.

At the present time my dispositions are as follows :—

Garrison at Herbertshöhe under Commander Beresford : four naval companies, two companies infantry, one 12-pounder field-gun from His Majesty's Australian Ship *Sydney*, one machine-gun section, detachment Army Medical Corps.

Garrison at Rabaul under Lieutenant-Colonel Paton : one company Naval Reserves, four companies infantry, one machine-gun section, detachment Army Medical Corps.

The balance of my troops will be held in reserve on board this ship in Simpsonhafen.

The flag will be hoisted at Rabaul this afternoon at three o'clock and my Proclamation read with as much ceremony as possible. The whole of the troops available will parade, march past, and salute the flag, while the warships in Simpsonhafen will co-operate by firing a royal salute. I have appointed an officer to organise native police, and have made necessary arrangements for proper administration of the territory.

I propose for the present to make my headquarters at Herbertshöhe, and probably later on at Rabaul.

Yesterday I forwarded by motor cycle orderly to the Acting Governor of German New Guinea a formal demand for surrender. He is not either at Herbertshöhe or Rabaul, but has retired inland about ten miles, to a place called Toma. About 8 P.M. my messenger returned with a letter from a Government official stating that the Acting Governor would reply to my communication at 4.30 P.M. to-day. In the event of his reply not being satisfactory, or his not calling upon me in response to my request, it is my intention to despatch a force to effect his arrest.

I understand from the Admiral that he intends leaving, with the warships *Australia*, *Melbourne*, and *Sydney*, for Sydney, for the purpose of escorting the Australian Expeditionary Force to Europe, leaving at Simpsonhafen the destroyers and submarines for our protection. It seems likely, therefore, that my force will be in this locality for some considerable time. I therefore ask, seeing that I am supplied with provisions for only sixty days, that the necessary steps be taken in sufficient time to replenish. I will have an estimate of requirements prepared and forward to you.

The health of the troops is excellent, there not being a single case of sickness in the hospital.

WILLIAM HOLMES, *Colonel,*
Brigadier Commanding.

To the Chief of the General Staff,
Melbourne.

ENCLOSURE 2 IN No. 16

Government House, Rabaul, New Britain,
September 14, 1914.

SIR,—As the warships are not leaving here for Sydney until to-morrow, I take the opportunity of forwarding you some further information as to our doings yesterday.

The flag was duly hoisted yesterday (Sunday afternoon) at three o'clock, the warships in the harbour co-operating by firing a salute.

The ceremony was held on a small park in the town close to the wharf, where I erected a temporary flagstaff. I paraded all available troops, and also men whom I have engaged for the native police force, on three sides of a square facing the flag. The Admiral and all officers of the fleet were present at the ceremony, which I studied to make as impressive as possible, both for the benefit of the European residents and the natives. Immediately upon the flag being broken the troops gave a royal salute, after which the National Anthem was sung by all present. Three cheers were then given for His Majesty the King. After this the Proclamation, of which I forward you herewith a copy, was read by the Brigade Major, and the whole of the troops—Navy and Army—native police, and a large number of friendly natives, marched past the flag in column of route and saluted it. Flagship's band attended.

A great number of copies of Proclamation in English and in German have been posted in conspicuous places throughout the town, and copies have also been forwarded to Herbertshöhe.

Immediately after the dismissal of the parade I received a message from the *Protector*, lying off Herbertshöhe, that the German troops were again advancing to attack that place, which was garrisoned by four companies Naval Reserves and

two companies infantry under Commander Beresford. I immediately gave orders for two companies infantry to stand by, and soon afterwards sent them on board the *Encounter* to reinforce Herbertshöhe garrison, Colonel Watson being sent in command. From reports received, however, I find that the attack was not of a very serious character.

About five o'clock my cyclist orderly returned with a letter from the Acting Governor of German New Guinea—Haber by name—reiterating his previous statement that no resistance would be offered to the occupation, but that he had no power to surrender New Britain or any other part of the German possessions. He stated he had no objection to meeting me and discussing the situation. From his letter I find that he has retired still farther into the mountain country to a place called Baining. I regarded his reply as unsatisfactory, and concluded that he was merely temporising in order to facilitate his escape. I therefore determined, after consulting with the Admiral, to instruct Colonel Watson to march at 5 A.M. on the 14th (to-day) with four companies infantry and two machine-gun sections towards Toma—about ten miles from Herbertshöhe—and endeavour to clear up the situation and effect the arrest of the Governor.

At six o'clock this morning I received a wireless message from Watson, through the *Encounter*, which was standing at Herbertshöhe, that he had arranged with the Commander of that ship to shell a position which he had received information was occupied in some strength between Herbertshöhe and Toma, and that immediately upon the cessation of the shelling he would proceed to carry out my orders to march on Toma.

The shelling by the ship was distinctly heard here and continued for about one hour, which should certainly have a great moral effect upon the enemy's troops. I have, of course, received no further information from Colonel Watson.

About 11 A.M. an English Methodist Missionary stationed on the north coast at Kabakada, near Talili Bay, reported that a new road had lately been completed from Toma westerly, a distance of about ninety miles, to the port of Pondo, and that he had reliable information that the Governor and the troops with him, who had been stationed at Toma for a month past, were marching to the coast with a view of embarking

on board the German ship *Komet* for conveyance to Friedrich Wilhelmshafen, in German New Guinea. This information I conveyed to the Admiral, and steps are being taken to at once search this locality by means of destroyers.

This morning I arrested twenty officials of the late German Government; men who have no other interests here, and whom I consider an element of danger, as I have strong suspicion that they are in communication with the Governor and the German troops still in the field. These, together with seventeen other Germans now on board the *Berrima* and about thirteen sent up from Herbertshöhe yesterday, will be sent to the fleet to-day and taken to Sydney. Many of these prisoners aver that they are non-combatants, but merely planters; but they are German reservists, and, I have every reason to believe, were engaged fighting against us, and to allow them to remain would only hamper my administration. All the native prisoners who have been taken I am making use of for working purposes.

The Admiral has just called to see me, and states that he intends leaving for Sydney early to-morrow morning with the *Australia*, *Melbourne*, and *Sydney*, and will leave here at my disposal the *Encounter*, the destroyers, and two submarines, also the *Protector*, and that probably the French warship *Montcalm* will arrive from Noumea and co-operate.

After consultation with the Admiral it has been decided not to move my force from this place until matters are more settled, and that an expedition will then be undertaken for the capture and occupation of Friedrich Wilhelmshafen, in German New Guinea, but this move will not be made until after consultation with Captain Lewin, of the *Encounter*, and the French Admiral.

Colonel Paton is doing good work as Officer Commanding Garrison at Rabaul. Captain Twynam is organising the native police satisfactorily, Lieutenant Ravenscroft is acting as Provost-Marshal, and Lieutenant Manning (a Sydney barrister) is carrying out the duties of Assistant Judge Advocate.

The water supply at Rabaul is fairly satisfactory, but precaution is taken to boil the water before use.

I have just received information from Colonel Paton that, before the seat of government was removed from here

to Toma, a large amount of cash was deposited by Treasury officials for safe keeping at the offices of some German companies. This is being investigated, and Paton states that he believes he is now in fair way to recover about £3000.

I have not yet received report as to supplies required for the population here, but, as soon as I ascertain what is necessary, I propose to get the fleet to wire for same to be forwarded to merchants or storekeepers here under my guarantee for payment.

The health of the troops still continues satisfactory, and I do not anticipate any difficulty in carrying on efficiently the administration of this territory. I will take every opportunity of keeping you informed from time to time of the progress of events.

A German Imperial flag, which I removed from the Government Administrative Buildings here, is being despatched to the Lord Mayor of Sydney, with a suggestion that he might make use of it in any way he thinks best for the purpose of stimulating recruiting for the additional forces which I have no doubt Australia will be despatching.

WILLIAM HOLMES, *Colonel,*
Commanding Australian Naval and Military Expedition.

To the Chief of the General Staff,
Melbourne.

PROCLAMATION

PROCLAMATION ON BEHALF OF HIS MAJESTY GEORGE THE FIFTH, BY THE GRACE OF GOD, OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND, AND OF THE DOMINIONS OVERSEAS, KING, DEFENDER OF THE FAITH, EMPEROR OF INDIA:

BY COLONEL WILLIAM HOLMES, D.S.O., V.D., BRIGADIER COMMANDING HIS MAJESTY'S AUSTRALIAN NAVAL AND MILITARY EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.

Whereas the forces under my command have occupied the Island of New Britain:

And whereas upon such occupation the authority of the German Government has ceased to exist therein :

And whereas it has become essential to provide for proper government of the said Colony, and for the protection of the lives and property of the peaceful inhabitants thereof :

Now I, WILLIAM HOLMES, Companion of the Distinguished Service Order, Colonel in His Majesty's Forces, Brigadier Commanding the aforesaid Expeditionary Force, do hereby declare and proclaim as follows :—

(1) From and after the date of these presents the Island of New Britain and its dependencies are held by me in military occupation in the name of His Majesty the King.

(2) War will be waged only against the armed forces of the German Empire and its Allies in the present war.

(3) The lives and private property of peaceful inhabitants will be protected, and the laws and customs of the Colony will remain in force so far as is consistent with the military situation.

(4) If the needs of the troops demand it, private property may be requisitioned. Such property will be paid for at its fair value.

(5) Certain officials of the late Government may be retained, if they so desire, at their usual salaries.

(6) In return for such protection it is the duty of all inhabitants to behave in an absolutely peaceful manner, to carry on their ordinary pursuits so far as is possible, to take no part directly or indirectly in any hostilities, to abstain from communication with His Majesty's enemies, and to render obedience to such orders as may be promulgated.

(7) All male inhabitants of European origin are required to take the oath of neutrality prescribed, at the garrison headquarters ; and all firearms, ammunition, and war material in the possession or control of inhabitants are to be surrendered forthwith, as is also all public property of the late Government.

(8) Non-compliance with the terms of this Proclamation, and disobedience of such orders as from time to time may be promulgated, will be dealt with according to military law.

(9) It is hereby notified that this Proclamation takes

effect in the whole Island of New Britain and its dependencies from this date.

Given at Government House, Rabaul, this twelfth day of September, 1914.

WILLIAM HOLMES, *Brigadier Commanding.*

Witness:

FRANCIS HERITAGE, *Major,*
Brigade Major.

ENCLOSURE 3 IN No. 16

Government House, Rabaul, New Britain,
September 19, 1914.

SIR,—In my letter to you, dated September 14, I mentioned that I had instructed Colonel Watson to march with four companies of infantry and two machine-gun sections towards Toma, with instructions to effect the arrest of the Governor. Watson's advance from Herbertshöhe was preceded by the shelling of the ridge with the guns of the *Encounter.* This shelling evidently had a very good effect, as before Watson reached Toma he was met by a flag of truce from the Governor, who offered to come in and confer with me, and requested in the meantime an armistice for four hours. This concession was at first refused by Watson, but afterwards arrangements were made by him for the Governor to meet me at Herbertshöhe on the following morning at 11 o'clock.

At 9.30 A.M. on the 15th instant I proceeded to Herbertshöhe from here, being accompanied by Major Heritage, Commander Stevenson, Royal Navy, and the other members of my staff. The interview with the Governor, whose name is Dr. Haber, continued until 3 P.M., when certain conditions of surrender were tentatively agreed to, the Governor stating that he preferred to consult his military officers before actually executing any agreement. I therefore gave him a typewritten copy of the conditions we had verbally agreed to, and arranged to meet him again at the same place at 12 noon on Thursday, 17th instant.

It is interesting to note that, while I was parleying with the Governor as to terms of surrender, the French warship *Montcalm,* with the French Admiral on board, passed in full

view from our meeting place at Herbertshöhe, and I had great pleasure in drawing the Governor's attention to her presence, at which he seemed rather disturbed. I may state that the Governor was received at Herbertshöhe by a guard of honour of 100, which remained in attendance throughout the interview and saluted him on his departure.

In accordance with the arrangements above referred to, I again met the Governor at Herbertshöhe on the 17th instant, when terms of capitulation were discussed and, in a few minor points, amended. They were then signed by the Governor and myself, the former's signature being witnessed by the German Military Commandant (Von Klewitz) and mine by Commander Stevenson, Royal Navy.

Upon my return to Simpsonhafen at about 7 P.M., I arranged with Captain Lewin, of the *Encounter*, to despatch to you, through the flagship *Australia*, the following wireless message :—

'Have met Governor, who states has no power formally surrender any portion German territory; has agreed in writing cease further resistance and transfer administration of whole German New Guinea to me on following terms :—

> '"Armed forces now in field surrender at once with military honours; Governor leaves here on parole, no obstacle return Germany; officers of regular Army remain prisoners of war; all others on taking oath of neutrality allowed return their plantations; black troops join native Constabulary now being organised; all moneys and property late Administration transferred to me; civil officials not required by me, or who will not take oath neutrality, deported to Australia, but no obstacle returning Germany; any British subjects now prisoners be released forthwith."

'Governor's undertaking does not cover any offensive action by German cruisers, with which communication destroyed; am now administering from Rabaul; will visit Wilhelmshafen and other parts first opportunity; everything satisfactory, health of troops excellent; supplies for population ordered through Admiral urgently required; additional rations, boots and lightest clothing for troops, also £5000 for pay, necessary; civil officials deported to be

paid three months' salary from October 1, also travelling expenses to Europe for selves and families, to be refunded from German Colonial subsidy by Governor.'

Attached hereto I am forwarding you a copy of the complete agreement arrived at. I intend to retain possession of the original until after I take possession of Friedrich Wilhelmshafen and other places which I may find it necessary to visit.

I have taken possession of Government House at this place, and propose to carry out the administration of the Possessions from this point, and, in order to enable me to devote all my attention to this duty, I propose to leave the command of the troops to Watson.

I mentioned that I was sending a large number of prisoners to Sydney by the fleet, but last night I received a message from the Admiral, who was on his way from here to Australia, that he was returning to this place and would arrive this day about 4 P.M., so that I shall now have the prisoners who were sent away back again on my hands. In view of the agreement arrived at I shall probably be able to release some of these to-morrow if they are prepared to take the oath of neutrality. The Governor himself will probably arrive in Rabaul on Monday next, and I have arranged to afford him accommodation in the Deputy Governor's quarters until a ship is available for sending him to Australia.

I understand that the sudden change of plans on the part of the fleet in returning here was due to information that a couple of days ago the German cruisers *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* had passed Apia and were steaming in a north-westerly direction. No doubt it is the intention of the fleet to follow up these ships, but this will not be confirmed until I see the Admiral.

I do not know yet what amount of money will be transferred to me by the Governor when the surrender of troops takes place, but, so far, I have managed to get possession in the town of 45,000 marks, all of which is believed to be German Government money. This, and a great deal more, will be required for carrying on the Government of the place.

You will remember the only money I took with me for pay of the men was £5000, and as there are good stores here the men are applying for advances on their pay, principally in order to purchase thinner shirts and other clothing, as

that issued them by the Government is absolutely unfitted for wear within the tropics, so that the money I now have with me will soon be exhausted ; I shall be glad, therefore, if you will see that my request for further funds is attended to without delay.

Another most important matter is the question of supplies, particularly for the population. The Admiral will, no doubt, long ere this have despatched to you the wire I suggested being sent ordering these goods, and I trust that they may now be on the water, as there are so many natives, consisting principally of Kanakas, Chinamen, and Japanese, whose staple food is rice, of which this town is almost cleared out ; and unless food supplies are replenished at once there is certain trouble in store for me at the hands of the native population.

To fill the vacancy caused by the death of Captain B. C. A. Pockley, killed in action, I applied for and obtained the consent of the Admiral for him to transfer the services of Dr. G. C. Byrne, who has been engaged on the *Encounter* at intelligence duties. I have appointed Dr. Byrne a Captain in the force at the usual rate of pay.

I have made a complete inspection of the whole of the garrison, including the barracks, hospitals (European and native), headquarters, native constabulary, administrative buildings, post office, customs house, legal departments, and all other places, and am gradually getting everything reduced to order. I propose to appoint Lieutenant Fry, whom I attached as Adjutant to the ' Kanowma ' contingent, and who will return here, I hope, in a day or two, Treasurer under the Administration, and it will be his duty to receive money, property, and documents to be surrendered by the Governor on Monday next.

September 21, 1914.

I have just received information from the Admiral that an opportunity for despatching a mail by the *Murex* will occur this afternoon, so I shall complete your letter.

Yesterday I received from the Admiral your inquiry as to supplies required for the troops here, and immediately afterwards requested the Admiral to despatch the following reply to you on my behalf :

'Recommend in addition to supplies already ordered through Admiral for population, that supplies for troops similar in quantities to those originally placed on *Berrima* be forwarded, but preserved meats substituted for frozen. Also four hundredweight malt, and fifty-six pounds hops, kerosene instead of candles. More clothing of lightest possible kind required, previous supply unbearable in tropics ; one pair of boots per man needed. Merchants here propose ordering goods through Justus Scharff, York Street, Sydney, who should be encouraged to supply, and thus restore normal conditions. Return freights copra assured if market not seriously dislocated. Require also five thousand pounds for pay for troops.'

I have suggested preserved meats because there are very poor facilities on shore here for storing frozen meat. At present we are depending almost entirely on the ship's refrigerating chamber, but as the *Berrima* may be ordered back at any time, and we will have to depend entirely on our shore provisions, then preserved meats will be the best.

The malt and hops are required for making yeast for baking bread. I have already erected on shore bread-baking plant, in order to afford the garrisons a change of food from the hard biscuits. Candles are of no use whatever on account of the high temperature. Kerosene is best for lighting purposes.

I wish again to impress upon you the fact that the thick clothing in use in Australia, which was issued to the troops for this expedition, is absolutely unbearable in this climate, and most of the men have, therefore, been compelled to buy lighter clothing from the stores here, out of their private purses, so please arrange that only the very lightest possible clothing be sent. One thousand five hundred pairs boots, of sizes similar to those previously issued, should also be despatched.

I am endeavouring to restore, as soon as possible, normal conditions of affairs as regards supplies for the population, and I have induced the principal merchants to despatch orders for goods to Messrs. Justus Scharff & Company, York Street, Sydney,[1] assuring them that there was very little risk, as the trade routes to these parts were quite open. I have also written myself to Justus Scharff, urging them to

[1] I believe these people are British. This might be ascertained.—W. H.

comply with these orders, and I would be glad if you also would communicate with that firm and encourage them to do all they can to open up trade with these islands. The merchants inform me that there is a large quantity of copra to be shipped away to market, and opportunity of so doing could be taken when the ship by which my provisions are conveyed is returning.

Five thousand pounds (£5000) additional will, I estimate, be required for pay of the troops at the different garrisons. I shall continue to pay them in British coin, and shall reserve the moneys which I am to take over from the late German Administration for carrying on the government of this place.

Yesterday I received through the Admiral a notification from the Naval Board that the Government had appointed me Administrator. This fact has been publicly announced here, and I have entered upon the duties.

As far as I am aware at present, there are only about £50 worth of postage stamps of the late German Administration available. These I am having marked 'G. R. I.,' by means of printing press which I have discovered here; but I would suggest that steps be at once taken to furnish me with Australian postage stamps, say, £300 worth, at the earliest opportunity.

Yesterday I dealt with about fifty-five prisoners in terms of the agreement of capitulation. Many of them have taken the oath of neutrality and returned to their farms. Others, particularly officials of the late German Administration, are prisoners on parole, whom I shall despatch to Sydney at the earliest opportunity, as keeping them here, where they can get into touch with natives, is not conducive to good administration.

The formal surrender of the German troops is taking place to-day at Herbertshöhe, and I am expecting the Governor and a large number of prisoners to arrive here this evening. I have arranged for quarters for the Governor until he can be shipped away, and the prisoners will be dealt with in terms of the agreement. Until this evening I shall not know what amount of money will be handed over by the Governor, and this mail closes at 4 P.M. to-day. The information must be deferred until my next letter to you, or possibly I may advise you by wireless.

Early to-morrow morning I am leaving here for Friedrich Wilhelmshafen, escorted by the *Australia*, *Encounter*, French flagship *Montcalm*, and possibly a destroyer. I am taking with me four companies of infantry, under Colonel Watson, and will probably detach two companies as garrison at that place, and return here in about a week to resume my administrative duties.

After conference with the Admiral, it has been decided, on arrival at Friedrich Wilhelmshafen, to send Captain Travers (my Intelligence Officer), accompanied by Lieutenant Mayer (a German regular officer, who was taken prisoner), ashore with a copy of the terms of surrender in English and another in German, for presentation to the head official there, with an intimation that I have come to take possession and occupy the place in terms of the agreement, and also secure an assurance from him that there will be no resistance to such occupation, and that the harbour is not mined or defended. In this matter I do not anticipate that there will be any difficulties, as the Governor's surrender included the whole of the German possessions lately under his administration, including the mainland of New Guinea.

The health of the troops, and also the population, continues good. The European hospital at the top of the hill, near Government House, has only just been opened, and is most complete in all its fittings and appointments. At the present time it is occupied by seven German sailors from the *Planet*, who are, of course, prisoners, and another German prisoner, whose right hand was shot off in the engagement at Herbertshöhe on the 11th instant. There are no men of our own inmates of that institution. In the native hospital there are 131 cases, and I understand this is about the usual number. This place is controlled by two German doctors, who are, I understand, very clever at treating native diseases, and, indeed, tropical diseases of all kinds, and I propose, if they will remain, to retain them in their positions.

Lieutenant-Colonel Paton is still commanding the garrison at Rabaul, and Commander Beresford, R.A.N., is in charge at Herbertshöhe, and I shall probably leave Major Martin, of the infantry battalion, in command at Friedrich Wilhelmshafen.

As my duties as Administrator increase, I may possibly find it necessary to place Lieutenant-Colonel Watson in

military command, so as to afford me full opportunity of attending to the other work, but I will keep you fully advised from time to time, as opportunity offers, of any such changes.

WILLIAM HOLMES, *Colonel,*
Administrator.

To the Chief of the General Staff,
Melbourne.

TERMS OF CAPITULATION

Made this 17th day of September 1914 between Colonel William Holmes, D.S.O., V.D., Brigadier Commanding the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force, on behalf of His Most Gracious Majesty George the Fifth, of the first part, and Herr E. Haber, Acting Governor of the German Possessions known as Deutsch Neu Guinea, on behalf of the Imperial German Government, of the second part.

Whereas the principal centres of Deutsch Neu Guinea have been occupied by an overwhelming force under the command of the said Colonel Holmes :

And whereas the said Acting Governor has no authority to surrender any portion of the German Possessions under his administration, but, in view of the said occupation by the said overwhelming force, the said Acting Governor is prepared to give an assurance that all military resistance to such occupation in Deutsch Neu Guinea shall cease forthwith :

Now, the following terms and conditions are solemnly agreed upon between the said contracting parties :—

(1) The name Deutsch Neu Guinea (German New Guinea) includes the whole of the German Possessions in the Pacific Ocean lately administered from Rabaul by the said Acting Governor, on behalf of the German Imperial Government, and the said Possessions are hereafter referred to as 'The Colony.'

(2) All military resistance to the said military occupation of the Colony shall cease forthwith.

(3) The armed German and native forces now in the field

are to be surrendered at Herbertshöhe on the 21st day of September at ten o'clock in the forenoon.

Military honours will be granted.

(4) Upon the said Acting Governor giving his parole to take no further part directly or indirectly in the present war, no obstacle will be placed in the way of his returning to Germany. Such parole shall not prevent the said Acting Governor from tendering to the Imperial Government at Berlin such advice as he may deem proper with regard to terms of peace.

(5) Such of the officers of the said forces in the field as are officers of the German regular forces will be treated as prisoners of war in the usual manner. Such of the officers of the said forces as are not officers of the German regular forces, but whose usual occupation is civil, on taking an oath of neutrality for the duration of the present war, will be released and permitted to return to their homes and ordinary avocations, except where such avocations are official, in which case the paragraphs 10 and 11 hereof will apply.

(6) As the said Acting Governor gives his assurance that none of the white non-commissioned officers and men now in the field belong to the regular forces of the German Empire, such white non-commissioned officers and men, upon taking the said oath of neutrality, will be released and permitted to resume their ordinary avocations, except where such avocations are official, in which case the terms of paragraphs 10 and 11 hereof will apply.

(7) As it is understood that the safety of the white population depends to an extent on the existence of a native constabulary, that portion of the armed native constabulary which now forms part of the German forces in the field, if found satisfactory, will be transferred to the Military Administration.

(8) As the administration of the Colony during the military occupation will be conducted by the British military commander, all moneys and properties of the late Administration are to be handed over to the said Colonel Holmes, Brigadier Commanding.

(9) During the said military occupation the local laws and customs will remain in force so far as is consistent with the military situation.

(10) As it is intended that administration shall be carried on under the control of British officers, subject to the succeeding paragraph, such only of the civil officials of the late German Administration as it may be considered necessary to retain in an advisory capacity will be continued in their offices. Officials so retained will be required to take the oath of neutrality and their former salaries will be continued. Officials not so retained, and those who refuse to take the said oath, will be deported to Australia, but will have no obstacle placed in the way of their returning thence to Germany as soon as possible.

(11) For the protection of the white population against the natives, the German officials now in charge of outlying portions of the Colony will continue in their official capacities until relieved by the Military Administration.

(12) Any British subjects at present imprisoned or held in duress in the said Colony are to be released and returned to their homes and former positions forthwith. This does not apply to such persons (if any) who may be serving a sentence imposed by a criminal court of competent jurisdiction.

In witness thereof the said contracting parties of this first and second parts have hereunto set their hands this 17th day of September 1914.

Witness to signature of E. Haber, HABER.
VON KLEWITZ.

Witnesses to signature of W. Holmes, WILLIAM HOLMES.
J. B. STEVENSON.
FRANCIS HERITAGE,
Brigade Major.

Addendum.

The contracting parties further agree that all civil officials, whether they take the oath of neutrality or not, be entitled to receive at least their three months' pay from October 1, 1914, out of the funds of the Colony, and also an advance on travelling expenses for returning home according to the regulations in force under German rule. It is further agreed that they shall have proper facilities for arranging their personal affairs in the Colony.

The Governor promises that the amounts expended

under this head will be refunded by the German Imperial Government, out of the yearly Colonial subsidy.

The Brigadier promises that proper care be taken in order to conduct women and children of deported officials to the place where their men are.

All claims due against the German Administration are to be paid for out of the funds of the Colony.

It is expressly understood that the papers relating to the personal status of the officials of the Colony shall be handed over to a German official designated by the Governor.

E. HABER.
WILLIAM HOLMES.

No. 19

The Governor-General of Australia to the Secretary of State

Governor-General's Office, Melbourne, November 11, 1914.

SIR,—I have the honour to forward herewith, for your information, copies of a despatch, dated Rabaul, September 26, 1914, received from Colonel W. Holmes, D.S.O., V.D., Commanding Naval and Military Expedition.—I have, etc.

R. M. FERGUSON, *Governor-General.*

ENCLOSURE IN No. 19

Government House, Rabaul, New Britain, September 26, 1914.

SIR,—I have just returned from Kaiser Wilhelmsland, and beg to confirm the wireless message despatched by me to you from Friedrich Wilhelmshafen, on 24th instant, which ran as follows :—

'Troops under my command occupied Kaiser Wilhelmsland to-day without opposition. Flag hoisted, Proclamation issued ; principal official absent. Four officials and thirteen other Germans surrendered. All subscribed oath neutrality. The officials will be temporarily engaged assist Administration ; others are planters, missionaries, business men. Forty fighting men left Wilhelmshafen fortnight ago reinforce

German troops, New Britain, but arrived after capitulation—now prisoners at Rabaul. Found private stores well stocked. Health troops excellent. Returning Rabaul.—HOLMES.'

At Wilhelmshafen I left as garrison one and a half company infantry and half company naval reserves, with 500 rounds ammunition per rifle and two months' supplies. I secured the commodious stores of the New Guinea Company as barracks for the troops, and also suitable premises for a hospital. Everything was quiet, and I do not anticipate that any trouble will arise there, but the Officer Commanding the garrison (Major Martin) has been instructed to construct defences against boat landings and take all possible precautions.

The whole of the European residents, who were Germans, surrendered immediately, and, as stated in my telegraphic message, the oath of neutrality was administered to each. The principal official was not available; I was informed that he had two days previously proceeded into the country on a punitive expedition against some natives who had been giving trouble, but of this I am in doubt. However, Major Martin has instructions to send for him or secure him as soon as he comes in. Amongst the German residents was a medical man who has charge of both European and native hospitals, and I have instructed Captain Byrne—the Medical Officer whom I left there with the garrison—to use his own judgment as to whether it will be necessary to continue the services temporarily of the German officer or to dispense with them.

The ships did not arrive at Wilhelmshafen until 11.15 A.M., and the whole of the business of hoisting flag, issuing Proclamation, landing and posting garrison and landing stores, was completed in six hours, and the *Berrima* left this place at 5.15 P.M., reaching Rabaul about 2 P.M. to-day.

For your information, I recapitulate hereunder my dispositions of the troops under command :—

Garrison at Rabaul

Officer Commanding, Lieutenant-Colonel Paton.
Four companies infantry.
One machine-gun section.
Detachment Army Medical Corps (Captain Maguire).

Garrison at Herbertshöhe

Officer Commanding, Commander Beresford, R.A.N.
Four companies naval reserves.
One machine-gun section.
Detachment Army Medical Corps (Captain Donaldson).

Garrison at Friedrich Wilhelmshafen

Officer Commanding, Major Martin.
Half company naval reserves.
One and a half company infantry.
Detachment Army Medical Corps (Captain G. C. Byrne).

Reserve on Board 'Berrima'

Officer Commanding, Lieutenant-Colonel W. W. Russell Watson.
Infantry regimental staff.
Two and a half companies infantry.
One and a half company naval reserves.
Detachment Army Medical Corps.

I find on my return to-day that, during my absence, the oil ship *Murex* had left for Sydney, having on board two German officials and thirty prisoners, under a guard consisting of one officer (Lieutenant Partridge), one sergeant, one corporal, eighteen privates, and one private of the Army Medical Corps. The Officer Commanding the garrison here (Lieutenant-Colonel Paton) furnished Lieutenant Partridge with a letter to the District Commandant at Sydney, containing a complete list of the prisoners in question.

The amount of money handed over by the German Governor up to the present is, I find to-day, about 400,000 marks—£20,000. I have appointed an officer Treasurer, and he is engaged making up the books, which, as far as I can ascertain, have not been balanced for about two years.

The officers I have placed in charge of the legal work, customs, police, and postal services are hard at work restoring order out of chaos, and I will keep you supplied from time to time with progress reports of the whole administration.

The ex-Governor, whom I have permitted to remain at Herbertshöhe, is to confer with me on the 28th instant, when

I hope to gain from him a clear insight into the whole of the business transactions of his Administration.

The health of the whole of the troops under my command continues extraordinarily good, not a single case being in hospital at the present time.

Although the weather is hot here, there is generally a strong south-east trade wind blowing, which tends to reduce the temperature and make the conditions bearable.

The work of the troops is being done principally in the early morning and again late in the afternoon, while during the hotter part of the day, from 11 A.M. until 4 P.M., they are resting.

After the occupation of this place I was fortunate in securing possession of two modern Krupp field-guns on carriages, one carriage being in good order, the other broken. I propose sending these to Sydney on the first opportunity, and it has occurred to me that it might stimulate recruiting for future Australian contingent if one gun was exhibited at the Town Hall, Melbourne, and the other at the Town Hall, Sydney.

A wireless station has been erected at the top of the hill overlooking Rabaul alongside Government House, and should prove of inestimable advantage in keeping up communication with the fleet.—I have, etc.

WILLIAM HOLMES, *Colonel,*
Administrator.

The Hon. the Minister for Defence,
Melbourne.

No. 23

The Governor-General of Australia to the Secretary of State

Governor-General's Office,
Melbourne, February 16, 1915.

SIR,—I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a report from the Administrator, Rabaul, New Britain.—I have, etc.

R. M. FERGUSON, *Governor-General.*

ENCLOSURE IN No. 23

The Administrator to the Minister of Defence, Melbourne

(Extract.)

Rabaul, New Britain, December 11, 1914.

In my despatch of November 28 I mentioned the fact that I had sent an expedition to the Admiralty Islands. This force left Rabaul on November 19, under the command of Major Heritage, on board the s.s. *Siar*, and visited the Admiralty and Hermit Islands. The flag was hoisted at both places, Proclamation read, and garrisons posted; the *Siar* returned to Rabaul on the 28th *idem*. Opportunity was taken at the same time to despatch a general cargo to these islands on behalf of the merchants here, and bring back return shipments of copra. The commercial earnings of the vessel on this expedition amounted to £356, 12s. 6d., and, as the debits totalled £200, the expedition, in addition to achieving its object of military occupation, resulted in a sound profit as a commercial venture.

The same course is being followed in connection with the trip of the *Meklong* to Bougainville, the net results of which I will advise you in next despatch.

The places which have now been satisfactorily occupied and flag hoisted by the forces under my command are :—

NEW BRITAIN { Rabaul. Herbertshöhe.

NEW IRELAND { Kaweing. Namatanai. Muliama.

KAISER WILHELMSLAND—Friedrich Wilhelmshafen.

NEW HANOVER.

BOUGAINVILLE { Kieta. Buka.

ADMIRALTY'S GROUP { Komuli—St. Andrew's Group. Lorengau. Nares Hafen.

HERMIT'S GROUP—Maron.

DUKE OF YORK GROUP—Mioko.

NAURU.

The whole of the late German possessions south of the

Equator may now therefore, I think, be considered to have been satisfactorily dealt with by my force. Other stations will be visited as opportunity offers, such as Eitape and Morobe in Kaiser Wilhelmsland, but there is no immediate hurry, as there is a strong garrison posted at Friedrich Wilhelmshafen.—I have, etc.

WILLIAM HOLMES, *Colonel,*
Administrator.

JAPANESE OPERATIONS

Berlin, October 8.

Reuter's agency in London reports from Peking that the Japanese have occupied the Island of Yap.[1] *K.V.*

Tokyo, October 20.

The Navy Department has announced the occupation for military purposes of the Marianne and Marshall Islands and the East and West Caroline Archipelagos. *Times,* Oct. 21 1914

[1] [Yap is one of the Caroline Islands where the Germans had established a wireless station.]

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